

FEMALE EFFORTS
IN
THE SAVIOUR'S CAUSE

DEFENDED AND ENCOURAGED.

BY ONE WHO "IS NOTHING."—GAL. vi. 3.

"I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh."—*Joel* ii. 28.

"Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."—*2 Cor.* iii. 17.

"As ye have received Jesus Christ the Lord, so walk ye in him."—*Col.* iii. 1.

"The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."—*Rev.* xix. 10.

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."—*Eccles.* ix. 10

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TO MRS. MARIA STEVENS,*

Knaresborough, Yorkshire.

DEARLY BELOVED PATRONESS, .

Do not reject one who "is nothing," because "his cup runneth over," for ELI was deceived,† when HANNAH poured out her soul in prayer, and was accepted; GOD is not mocked. Continue to sow, in the exercise of that calling which evidently possesses the testimony of JESUS: for the promise is yet future. Let your light shine, through grace, mercy, and peace from above, before all men, to the glory of GOD.

The deserved praises which resound to your name,—your exemplary conduct,—your singular graces, could receive no new or additional impetus from me; nor do I presume to think the following pages will add any lustre to your excellence, much less be found worthy records of the important subjects they embrace, and profess to advocate. Yet I do humbly hope the LORD will be pleased to accept "the calves of our lips,"‡ and cause His blessing to rest upon this feeble effort to His honour and glory, in and through the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

May we, and ALL, especially those dear to us, be found in Him!

Your's, &c.

THE AUTHOR.

* This highly gifted lady cannot be considered answerable for *the errors* herein contained, as she had no opportunity of seeing the work until printed.

† 1 Samuel i. 14.

‡ Hosea xiv. 2.

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P R E F A C E.

HAD we deemed it possible by arguments, set forth in the happiest exhibition of mathematical precision, to touch the heart, or arrive at the Q. E. D. of an immortal soul's responsibilities, we should have been sadly grieved about the confusion of our observations in the following pages. As it is, we feel that the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy.¹ He who has ordained strength out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, has often been pleased to bless the feeblest efforts in His cause; and it is in this view of Almighty Providence, in fervent hope that some good effects may result, that the following pages have been sent forth, at a juncture, of all times, since the first revelation of the gospel, apparently teeming with importance to the British public.

Many will be the objections raised against this subject, which has hitherto been studiously avoided,

¹ Psalm xxxiii. 18.

even by those whose duty it was to have done it justice : it may seem bold and presumptuous in a layman to meddle with it, but when the universality of its influence is considered, all fears are laid at rest. *None* can have failed to see, however situated, some fruit of such PASTORAL-AID, or lay-agency, as is treated of in this work, though *some* will doubtless still continue *seeing* (as the Holy Ghost by Esaias spake,²) *without perceiving*, because of UNBELIEF. A learned disquisition would have suited the tastes of the latter description of persons, better than a few pages thrown together, without sufficient attention to order in their arrangement, much less any pretensions to originality or embellishment. Thousands of cases, full of example, as well as interesting anecdotes, might have been detailed ; but this was a broad field, a mine of wealth which might not safely be entered upon, by such a superficial labourer. The task of satisfying all, is not attempted here ; it may be safely committed to better hands ; and if these pages should in any way be the means of stirring up some *master mind* to do justice to what *has been done* by those beloved of their Lord, who went forth in his strength and returned rejoicing to their rest, and thereby incite even one soul to follow on in such a noble track, to God be all the glory.

The object of this work is,—to encourage ALL ;—

² Isaiah vi. 9. Jeremiah v. 21. Acts xxviii. 26.

to induce every one to "do good," "depart from evil," and "trust in the Lord;" to shew that the Lord's vineyard has been and still is open to labourers of all grades, stations, or ages, from the dawn of day, to the eleventh hour; and that women, for many ages after the death and resurrection of the Saviour, while the visible church of Christ retained its purity, continued to minister, by authority, in holy things; that they are still, although kept in the back ground, the working bees in this hive of Great Britain; and lastly, that it would be well for all drones in spiritual things, to bear with, where they cannot imitate, the active piety, simple faith, and exemplary conduct of those, who in love and gratitude to their Redeemer, are like him going "about doing good."³

An interval of peace, for more than twenty years' duration, has tended to produce unbelief, though this age of profession would seem to deny it. *We are* increased with goods, think ourselves rich, in need of nothing; overlooking, in lukewarmness, our own nakedness. May He, who alone gives sight to the blind, cause us to discover, that the strong and subtle enemy of mankind is still actively and diligently as ever at work, to compass the ruin of immortal souls; that his deadly malice remains against our race; and that to see man restored to the favour of God and the likeness of his glorious image, is hell itself to the

hatred of Satan, who, with all his principalities and powers, his might, and vast experience, is still seeking whom he may devour ! It behoves the followers of the Lord Jesus to put on the whole armour of God, to live in godly jealousy of themselves, having their loins girded, and their lamps burning ; lest taken in any unguarded moment, they be shut out from the glorious company, who, at the second coming of the great Captain of their salvation, will exclaim, with holy zeal, "*This God is our's.*"

The judgment is often convinced, 'while the heart remains untouched ; thus, thousands profess to believe in Christ with their mouths, and deny their professions in their actions, confessing, but keeping, their besetting sins ! This is an awful plight to be in,—precisely the state of the Jews, when their land was made "*utterly desolate,*" and "*the salvation of God was sent unto the Gentiles.*" It resembles the state of that man's heart, who regularly partakes of the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and continues in sin. Without a thought deeper than the "*mind's eye,*" how can a man prove his own work ? And until he does so, how can he have rejoicing ? Every man must think for himself, for sooner or later "*all sinners must be weepers.*" It is hoped that every reader will be able to apply some portion herein contained, to his or her own case, for no distinction has been made

of sex, the operations of the Holy Spirit being confessedly alike free to all, male and female ; both alike answerable for their talents, and although many live from day to day careless of “ the things that belong to their peace,” they will one day assuredly have a fearful answer to their practical question of “ Where is the promise of his coming ? ” Bear in mind that Satan, called a murderer and a liar from the beginning, enticed, under the semblance of a serpent, “ the mother of all living,” to break God’s positive law, by eating the forbidden fruit. “ The first man ” suffered himself to be seduced by perverse and confused notions of good and evil, prompted by a desire of a greater degree of perfection, swayed by his sensual appetite, in contradiction to his reason—and *fell* ; he lost the chief good, his nature became corrupt, and his soul exposed to misery ; yet was he not finally left to perish, for God mercifully provided a Saviour, to wash away his stain. So that, by the influence of his Holy Spirit working in due season, *man* becomes regenerate, united to Christ by faith, lives a life of dependence on the precious promises, in strict regularity and obedience to God’s word, cleansing himself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. He lives a life of holy joy and peace, has a hope that maketh not ashamed, full of immortality. The work

of sanctification is carried on in the soul, which is preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the *fall of man* we perceive the greatest infidelity, folly, pride, ingratitude, beside contempt of God's majesty and justice. *That man is fallen*, the innumerable calamities of life, and certain pangs of death, may convince us. While in *his recovery* and *future state* we are lost in admiration and wonder, at the marvellous works of the God of Abraham, whose glory Moses trembled at and durst not behold; and of whose kingdom there shall be no end. This is that kingdom of which Jesus spake to Pilate, when he bore witness of the truth, saying, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world." "My kingdom is not of this world." This is the kingdom which is to come, for the glory of which the Lord's people are "one and all" bound to strive, with all their faculties, powers, and opportunities, relying on the grace of Jesus to strengthen them.

Let not, therefore, those "little children" who love the Lord Jesus Christ, be discouraged from going into the vineyard, by any devices of their subtle enemy, under whatever specious appearance the tempter may attack them. The way is plain, "cease to do evil, learn to do well," and in due time the

scales will fall from the eyes of all who shall ask in faith, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"⁴

A new era has dawned upon us, in the elevation to the throne of the high and mighty Princess, Alexandrina Victoria, our gracious Sovereign Lady, Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, and so forth; long may she, in the fear of the Lord, continue to reign over this highly favoured country! Like ELIZABETH, educated in the truth, may she stand forth boldly in the cause of her blessed Redeemer, and prove a nursing mother to the church! There never was a period, perhaps, when discretion, knowledge, both divine and human, and zeal, were more needed in the sovereign. O that Victoria may go on from strength to strength, daily growing in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, that she may be enabled to minister in the most profitable manner to the Lord's glory, and her subjects' happiness! The fervent prayers of all her dutiful subjects ought to be daily offered up at the throne of grace, that she may "reign for ever;" that seeing there is a never-fading crown in store for her, she may live, in all her thoughts, words, and works, to the honour and glory of God: studying to encourage piety and godliness amongst her people, by keeping especially the ecclesiastical bench filled with the "salt of the earth," that there may be "no complaining in our streets." The

⁴ Acts ix. 6.

benevolent disposition of our youthful sovereign has appeared before the public; already has the effect of her clemency been felt, in the administration of public justice; and sooner or later the remotest points of her dominions will surely witness to the fulfilment of that promise, which the brightness at the rising of our occidental star gave out. Her people's happiness, and especially the care of the poor and needy, must lie very near her feeling heart. Let us wait patiently to see the development in public life, of those virtues, which have so abundantly graced the private walk of our beloved sovereign, resting satisfied that, through preventing grace, we shall at all times be able to look up to Her Majesty as our best friend on earth, in every time of need.

An impression seems to gain ground, that ladies are not [is *every* man fit, or are there more in proportion of the men?] fit agents for the spread of gospel truth, or even for benevolent purposes. They may not indeed, in many cases, be the fittest spiritual advisers; but surely, a crust of bread or cup of cold water from their hands would not be tainted? We trust the envious breath of infidelity will not be permitted to destroy the germ of active piety in such lovely plants. So far is this feeling carried in opposition to the spirit of the Apostolic age, that we find fathers in the church opposing lay-agency altogether!

What do they think of the "*fellow-helpers*" and "*servants*" of the church, in St. Paul's time, authorized and continued for a thousand years afterwards in the persons of women?⁵ Did none of these noble females die martyrs in their profession of faith?

In the Moravian church, the wives of the missionaries undertake the *spiritual charge* of the females. Are not the women of England as well educated and instructed in "those things belonging to their peace," as capable of undertaking this work, as any females in the world? Yes; we have no hesitation in saying they are as fully qualified in every respect. It cannot be concealed from the observation of the most inattentive, that there is need, as much now as ever there was, for aid in every department of working piety. Many excellent divines approve of help, while others, unfortunately, declaim against aid of any kind, in the most extended parishes; so that it would be endless work to attempt to expose and confute, systematically, all the arguments which have been made use of against the exertions of lay-men and women; and would take up more time and paper than would be profitable, believing as we do that the record of *Holy writ* is ample testimony, at any rate, to the lawfulness, if not expediency, of such benevolent labours. No novel or sarcastic paper of any kind, however speciously got up, or beautifully coloured by poetical

⁵ See Appendix D.

licence, ought to have any weight with parents and guardians in comparison with *such testimony*; and far be it from us to print one word which we did not believe to be *scriptural*.

To add a line to the enormous variety of publications now before the world, would seem a work of supererogation; there can be nothing new, *entirely new*, although there may be something good resulting wherever the spirit which pervades the work is charitable, as, it is hoped, is the case with this. And although the advocacy of so good a cause would have been more properly committed to others, better qualified to shew forth the valuable nature of the efforts now making in the Saviour's cause, yet this attempt has been made to shew, first, that blessings attend, and that scripture warrants; and, secondly to urge to greater extent the labours of pious women in every branch of the tree of the Lord's planting. Whatever profit may accumulate from the sale of this work, shall be made over in equal proportions to the CHURCH PASTORAL-AID and RELIGIOUS TRACT societies, and the LONDON CITY MISSION; kindred institutions in which the worth of lay-agency is acknowledged and appreciated.

England, we have shewn, is not singular in the piety of the fair sex; they have been, throughout all ages of the world, celebrated for more kindness to

their suffering fellow-creatures than the men ; it seems natural they should be, and scarce possible to conceive any one wicked enough to attempt to deprive them of the privileges which their sympathy produces ; yet there *are those* who would tell us that women have no business with matters of religion, as if they had no souls to save ! There is great reason to fear that *all such as* would invent excuses to keep back or hinder, in any way, the influence of pious women, where such is exerted with a single eye to the honour and glory of God, are only “heaping up wrath against the day of judgment through the hardness and impenitency of their hearts.”⁶ *they* shall not escape.

There are others who say that it is not becoming, under any circumstances, in women, especially in young ladies and delicate females, to visit beds of sickness, the cottages of the poor, or houses of mourning ; who deny that any good may be done by going about to exhort, read to, or pray with, the distressed ; and last, not least, would try to persuade us that such proceedings are not sanctioned by the word of God. To all such *carillers* we would refer the consideration of the following pages, which, although unworthy of the cause, yet may suffice to shew that *once* the fair sex were no mean labourers in the harvest ; and point out, perhaps, to those who have

⁶ Romans ii. 5.

been deterred hitherto from entering on the work, by blindness of heart, or whatever cause, it matters not, that there is a great work for *each* and *all* to do: none can be idle here, who wish to find themselves clothed in the wedding garment hereafter.

Talents hid become a curse; take care you are not to blame on this account. Are you walking Zion-ward alone, regardless of all around you? Have you no time, no money to spare? Have you no blessings of education or station in life which call upon you to impart a portion to others, your needy neighbours? A word in season, how good is it! Think deeply on your responsibilities; you cannot think too humbly of yourselves, or too highly of your opportunities, when you recollect that they are given you for ensamples—you will be tried by them! In that day when the Divine Majesty shall come to judge the world, where shall you appear? If you have not possessed *His* spirit, recollect, *you are none of His!*

The Saviour went about doing good; lived a life on earth of thirty-three years of self-denial, anxious only to do the will of his heavenly Father; and shall not we, who call his Father *our Father*, try to find out the will of Omnipotence? Rest assured, God is a consuming fire to all that presume to approach his everlasting presence in any other way than that which

he has ordained ; for man to try any other, is only to seal his own condemnation. Jesus Christ is the way, and the truth, and the life ; nor is there any other name by which sinners may be saved. Do the will of God in Christ Jesus ; walking in his ways and keeping his commandments, especially "*loving one another ;*" now this cannot be fulfilled at all without the fruits of holiness. No general directions can be given, nor indeed would anything beyond hints be considered desirable ; for it would be vain to suppose that any rules could be laid down to suit every case,—all dispositions, all people ! So difficult a task has not in consequence been attempted, feeling satisfied that it could have been attended with no good result generally, and in many individual cases would have been productive of much hinderance to the exercise of private charities. Union here, as well as in the whole Christian church, would be very desirable ; and ladies having opportunity, might meet⁷ together at any stated time, to arrange their plans in the common cause for the common good, with great advantage to all parties, and the more equitable distribution of their charities, &c. &c.

When the object of this provocation to more strenuous effort in the Saviour's cause was stated, the

7 [Contrive to meet together, and the good effects will soon appear. Solomon says, "in multitude of counsellors *there is safety.*"—Proverbs xi. 11.]

direct reason was not given for the publication, and this would be no easy thing to do, satisfactorily at any rate, to all parties; for there are those already working beyond their strength, fairly exhausted and spent in the cause, which from them could not receive any new impetus; others, with less means at their disposal, are endeavouring as much as lies in their power to glorify God in Christ. It is not probable that either of these classes could be benefitted, but they bear a very small proportion to the amount of population, by far the greater half of which are careless of such matters; or, perhaps, as the lamentable truth must out, averse to change, especially in any concern of religion, however mildly it may be brought to their notice, or apparently useful it may be in effect: it matters not to such people whether the gospel is preached or not, whether the poor are attended to, or what becomes of their own souls. There is no vitality in their religious life, if it may be so called; whether they eat or drink, or dance, or sing, it is not to the glory of God, but, alas!—would they allow it?—to their own destruction.

It is to those who have never yet thought seriously on the necessity of seeking salvation in another way, than by a mere heartless worship offered occasionally, that it may be, through these pages, my privilege to speak. The title may attract the notice of some of

this description; and if they should be induced to “go about,” or even *think about* their needy fellow-creatures, good that they expected to communicate, may perhaps be their own happy portion; while endeavouring to relieve suffering, new impulses may be given to the affections of their own hearts; the imaginations of the thoughts of which may spring from a star in glory new to them, but which, like the MAGI of old, they may follow implicitly, till it lead them to the manger—not of gay and thoughtless extravagance, but humility, *deep contrition*, and everlasting mercies—there they may lie down and feed on manna from heaven, the bread of life, the blessed Jesus!

His ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts; for what concord hath Christ with Belial?⁸

“The world” cannot see as those separated from its vortex are enabled to see. “It is not by what the *lord mayor* feels in his coach, but by what the apprentice feels who gazes on him, that the world is benefitted;” it is by looking up continually (in hopes of getting there at last) to the source of all enjoyment, that the FAITH of the believer is established. To point out the way to glory, by expounding or exhorting, as well as to do good, is well pleasing to God, especially when such works spring out of a true and lively faith, known only by its fruits, and when Almighty Providence is duly considered; and many

⁸ 2 Corinthians vi. 15.

there be who find “the pearl of great price” while *digging* in the cottages of the poor,—I do not say *visiting*, because you may visit, give alms, and never think for a moment on the motives that actuated you; but no one can dig without using some exertion, some force, which is the more apparent the less experienced the hand. No one undertakes digging without a good reason, because it is real work in which the whole body must be engaged; so it is with acts of charity; some give they know not why, others because they *feel grateful*, and have a wish, in opposition to the impulses of the carnal mind, to do good to all men, denying themselves and taking up their cross daily; in exercise of that hope which maketh not ashamed, well knowing, from the infallible word of God, that such labour is not in vain; and that in due time they shall reap if they faint not: content to follow, they soon discover that they are not behind. David would have all to wait on the Lord, for he had felt that it was good to do so. He says, “Wait, I say, on the Lord.” Be of good courage, whoever you are, that *wait*, and continue in all things to try and serve your Master, who giveth liberally to all, and upbraideth not. You may be surprised, like the two ladies that waited on the teaching of the Rev. George Griffith, in the West Indies, when pleading for the Homily Society, who did not even know

what a *Homily* was; of whom he said, "Those ladies now know well what Homilies are; they have deeply imbibed the life-giving, the soul-cheering, and soul-purifying doctrine of the Homilies, and have transferred them into their own hearts and conduct; and there you may read with ease what a Homily is: they are living, walking, working Homilies through my parish."⁹

Much might have been said on each of the characters extracted [Part II.] from the Bible, expatiating on their virtues, qualifications, opportunities, and duties of station; developing their alms-deeds, good works, and labours of love; but this would have swelled these pages, already too digressive, into an expensive book. May some one, impressed with the serious and important nature of the labours of love now engaged in, and upheld in this land of Great Britain, *by females chiefly*, undertake to write; and may the Lord give his blessing to the work, that all may not only *know* and rightly understand what the will of the Lord is concerning such matters, but that they may also be stimulated by the same knowledge to *learn* and *labour truly* to do their duty in every station of life.

We had, through mercy, with great refreshment,

⁹ Extract from occasional paper, No. XIV. of Prayer Book and Homily Society, Midsummer, 1837.

got so far on our way, [the Spirit helping our infirmities, for they are many, both of the body and spirit]¹ and we were about to erect our EBENEZER, saying, "Hitherto hath the LORD helped us,"² when it pleased HIM more fully to refresh "our waiting souls" before parting, by sending an eloquent minister³ to unfold *His* word, and comfort us exceedingly; and so close to our own door, as to *enable* us, though against the advice of our medical attendant, to go and feed upon His word, although we had not been out

¹ The author would here venture to say, that he is at times unable to read more than a few verses of scripture; that he has often been compelled to put down the *proofs* of this work, for some time, to rest himself; and lastly, that he had not been out of bed for more than six hours out of the twenty-four, for three weeks, until the Rev. E. T. preached;—*as some excuse* for what otherwise might appear as culpable or even wilful negligence in the arrangement of this work. Many times he has been *tempted* to think of foregoing the publication altogether; but this temptation, by reading, meditation, and prayer, has soon been succeeded by, if possible, a more earnest desire to proceed.

² 1 Samuel vii. 12.

³ Mr. Tottenham, M. A. Kensington Chapel, Bath, preached from 2 Timothy iii. 14, 15, on behalf of the funds of the LADIES' HIBERNIAN SCHOOL SOCIETY, at HOLY TRINITY CHURCH, HOTWELLS, on the evening of the 8th of November, 1837, to a congregation nine-tenths of which appeared to us to be ladies.

for many days before. The Rev. gentleman spoke eloquently, and at times with much feeling; especially when he alluded to the necessity for continuing diligently in the things [spiritual] which his believing hearers had, like Timothy, learned to value; and on the other hand, pressed upon those who were yet strangers to that treasure which was freely offered "without money and without price," earnestly and *at once* (for "behold, now is the accepted time") to seek and to strive for that *saving* knowledge of the holy word, which alone could make them, through faith, wise unto salvation.

We were melted into tears of gratitude to the Giver of every good, when we were told of this *to us new* instance of his mercy towards so many poor female children; and rejoiced exceedingly to think that in one case, a dear child, educated at one of the Society's many schools, had been made the happy instrument in bringing *saving knowledge* to its *catholic* parents, now members of the protestant communion. But what was our joy, wonder, and thanksgiving of heart, when the minister told us that there were two hundred and thirty-two schools, and twelve thousand children now receiving instruction by means of this Society! To God be all the glory! We only regretted we had so little to give in aid of such an instance of the blessed fruits of FEMALE EFFORT.

The earnest prayer of the author is, that the Holy Ghost may vouchsafe his glorious presence, to write on the hearts of all who read these pages such a commentary as shall not be effaced ; that whatever impressions are received from the perusal, may all be to the honour and glory of God the Father, in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

BRISTOL.

N. B. Any hints for new arrangement or amendment of this work, will be thankfully acknowledged in the second edition, if directed, *post paid*, to A. B., Post Office, at Penzance, Cornwall.

FEMALE EFFORTS,

&c.

PART I.

Brief view of the present state of the world generally, and of Great Britain particularly.—Necessity for labourers, and importance of the work.—Outline of what is doing by Christian women.

THE world, speaking of the earth, still remains, when regarded as a whole, in the blackness of darkness, superstition, and ignorance ; as light, and no lighter, than the sun appeared, at the height of the annular eclipse, on the 15th May, 1836, at those places where it was seen to greatest perfection. It does not fall within our province to touch upon prophecy, neither to allude to it in any way ; but to endeavour to confine ourselves to a superficial

view of the state of the world, or face of the globe, with reference to the light of the gospel. We have compared it to an annular eclipse,—for there is light, and it may be said to be all around; but alas, how superficial is it! the centre and body of the sphere is still dark as in the early ages. We find, indeed, that in many provinces of Asia, and Turkey, where the apostles and their disciples preached the everlasting truth, with such faith and fervent zeal, that multitudes were often convinced of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, by even one discourse, that the light has gone out entirely, being superseded by the fatal error of the false prophet of Mecca, whose *Hegira*, or flight, took place in the year 622, or about sixteen years after the Pope's supremacy over the Christian church was established by BONIFACE III. From this awful period, until the commencement of the Reformation, about seven hundred years after, darkness seemed to be gathering on the face of the earth; although the northern parts of Europe, as Russia,

Sweden, Norway, and a portion of China and India, received additional light, yet errors and heresies were every where appearing, as a more than sufficient counterbalance. About the close of the sixteenth century, the spirit of Luther and Calvin seemed to gain strength, and the errors of popery began to be exposed to the world. Missionary efforts became apparent in many places, where the sound of the glad tidings of peace was unknown; and a more fervent zeal according to knowledge¹ animated the followers of Christ.

It remained, however, for the present age to develop the true missionary spirit. We now see, as it were, the whole world in labour, groaning beneath a weight of responsibility, and urging forward, by every species of religious excitement, the energies of all who feel an interest in the work of spreading gospel truth.

The pouring out of the Spirit, promised in the second chapter of Acts, seems to be already "distilling as the dew," upon the bones so

¹ See Appendix C.

long left to whiten on the plains of "the solitary place;" so much so, that if we understood the signs of the times, we should be tempted to say, there are those among us who shall see "the desert rejoice and blossom abundantly, because of the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God." ²

The hopes of the Apostolic age, of the early fulfilment of the Redeemer's promise, by his angel, Acts i. 11; of his speedy return, which had been blighted unexpectedly; received new vigour at the Reformation, when truth seemed to be revived in all its native simplicity and pristine sanctity: but alas! the Christian world had again deceived themselves. And so it may be now; yet, as far as we can see, (short-sighted mortals!) the candle at Rome gives but a flickering and uncertain light; just now, perhaps, brighter than it has been for ages past, yet not the less likely to be extinguished. We have some genuine cases of conversion among the Jews; and the power of Mahomet is circumscribed; if not destroyed entirely, it is

² Isaiah xxxv. 1, 2.

paralyzed; how soon it may be "*broken without hand,*" and the Jews restored to Palestine, no mortal tongue can tell. We know the Lord will hasten it in his time, and it becomes us to rest satisfied, with Daniel, in our respective lots, until that time may be made clearer to us. Deeply interesting as the temporal feast of the soul is, (for thus did a dear departed friend always speak of the study of prophecy) we must be very careful lest in this, or any other feast, we be led away by the will of the flesh, from the will of our heavenly Father. As the prophet Habakkuk, when waiting for an answer from the Lord, was shewn that he must wait by faith, "for the vision *is* yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry;"³ even so, does it appear that we, continuing in all things to do the will of God in Christ, must patiently endure as passive instruments in the hands of an almighty and all-sufficient Providence.

In this our day, we look back upon portions

³ Habakkuk ii. 3.

of the earth that have been visited by the light of the gospel for a time, which have relapsed to that state which "is worse than the first;"⁴ we are struck with wonder and astonishment at the violations of the law of God: who can help expressing the deepest feeling of sorrow for those wretched sinners, that have despised the great salvation held out for ages, and who are now perishing for lack of knowledge, because of their transgressions? Such is the pitiable case of China and Chinese Tartary, where the Jesuits proclaimed the glad tidings, with more or less faithfulness, for a period of more than seven hundred years. Such also is the lamentable state of Egypt, Barbary, and other spots of Africa, now entirely Mahometan. The heart of every true believer must feel for the honour of that wisdom which has made him to differ; and, as he desires to be conformed to the image of his Lord and Master, Jesus, will be stimulated to exertion. Let him consider the state of the world numerically, and he will be pained to admit that

⁴ Matthew xii. 45.

three-fourths of the eight hundred millions which the earth sustains, are fed *by it* only, and know nothing of "that bread that endureth to everlasting life;" that more than half of the whole mass are idolaters; that one-eighth of the population has been corrupted by the errors of Mahomet, [who, be it remarked, has in almost every place established, "prospered, and practised," his "dark sentences," where the sound of the gospel had been known for some ages, and rarely where paganism prevailed; thus pointing out the transgressions of the churches of Asia, so feelingly exhorted to repent in the Revelation of Saint John, that they were "come to the full,"] by whose craft and policy, according to the prophecy, the mighty and holy people were destroyed. Of the rest of the population, there are a few millions of the "scattered among the heathen," still profaning "that name which is above every name," as Jews and Gentiles; and the remainder, a portion not equal to one-fourth of the whole, are nominally Christians.

are held, the spirit of unity in different sects and denominations evidently increases; the church of Christ daily grows in all the graces of the Spirit; love, joy, and peace, pervade all the operations of the missionary societies, and animate to love and affection the zeal of their supporters. Hundreds of thousands of pounds sterling are annually raised for the support of missionary exertion; while for charities of various kinds at home, a sum far exceeding that, though quite beyond the reach of estimate, is disposed of, by government publicly, and individuals in private. If a return could be made of one year's expenditure in this way, we feel sure that the whole world would be astonished at its amount.

There is scarcely a known tongue, into which some part of everlasting truth has not been translated; and the establishment of printing presses all over the world, gives a facility to the spread of the gospel, which bids fair, in a few years, through the rising generation, to confer upon a benighted world the knowledge

of that glorious One, who came to lighten the darkness. Who is there alive now, that was of an age to observe, that does not see a wonderful change since the beginning of this century? And who could have supposed at that time, that France herself, the victim of anarchy, would not only feel the blessed effect in some degree, but also lend a helping hand? Thousands of Christians, possessing the missionary spirit, are now at work, at home and abroad;—but *they are as a drop in the ocean*; what can they do? We remember *the loaves and fishes*, and feel that unless the same hand be put to the plough, the work, though apparently prosperous, — nay, glorious — to our short-sighted vision, will be but tardy in its accomplishment. We do not presume to approach the LORD, as thinking that we are able of ourselves to do any thing; but only as servants devoted to, and willing in all things to do and suffer his righteous will. *He* will hasten it in his own good time; and whether the Jews now scattered amongst all nations, may be

made the sanctified instruments of his work, we know not ; although, if we were competent judges, and might express an opinion, they would appear, of all men, best qualified for such an undertaking. Conceive six millions of men convinced of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, looking upon Him whom they had pierced, as the way, and the truth, and the life, having their loins girded, their lamps burning, their staffs in their hands, and ready to go forth ! In every language proficient, natives of every country and climate, inured to hardship and lives of privation,—who so well fitted as they ? Yet who hath “ caused the day-spring to know his place ; that it might take hold of the ends [or wings] of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it ?”¹ The Lord only.

Prayer for an out-pouring of the Holy Spirit is now the general cry ; and a gracious sign it is, when the Giver of every good and perfect gift teaches his people to seek their blessings

¹ Job xxxviii. 13.

at the hand of his mercy. O that the prayers of the Lord's people may be answered !

While we are, each one of us, giving our mite for the conversion of the heathen world, it would profit us nothing if all the nations should obey the call, and we remain in ignorance of the power of the gospel on our own hearts ; as every man shall bear his own burden, so must every man prove his own work, that he may have cause of rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another : " All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God." ² Let us then see to it, that while, by our subscriptions, we are preaching to others, we be not castaways ourselves ! There is no halting, no looking back ; we must press onwards, if we expect a blessing to be upon our labours ; this life is our probationary period, in which we must choose whether we will go a part only, or the whole way towards the promised land : there must not be any murmurings, but a cheerful obedience. It becomes a question of importance for every soul to answer, What

² Isaiah lii. 10.

am I doing? 'There is a sphere, however small, for every one to fill. None can say, I have looked around me, and find there is no work for me to do. At home, though not so numerous, there are heathens as ignorant as any pagan idolater. Let any one arise and view the ruins around his own immediate neighbourhood, with the least touch of sympathy, such as David felt, when "rivers of waters ran down his eyes," because the people transgressed God's holy law; or as Saint Paul, who, in speaking of transgressors, said, "of whom I tell you even weeping;"³ and he will soon find, that in comparison of the work to be done, the labourers are few indeed. Of the magnitude and importance of the work *experience* only can speak.

Great Britain has attained, in the scale of civilization, a fearful eminence. Her best friends must tremble for her, lest in the urgency of the claims upon her evangelizing spirit, she should forget her own welfare; her own progress in piety; her own eternal in-

³ Philippians iii. 18.

terests.—“None have more need to plough in the closet, than those who would reap in the pulpit.” While Britain is striving to benefit the world at large, may those who are set as watchmen, give timely warning, lest she forget herself, and prove unmindful of all the Lord’s mercies. They have need to mark the state of the metropolis, of which Dr. Yates, in 1815, says, “Such a mine of heathenism, and consequent profligacy and danger, under the very meridian (as is supposed) of Christian illumination, and accumulated around the very centre of British prosperity, liberty, and civilization; cannot be contemplated without terror by any real and rational friend of our established government, in church and state; and is surely sufficient to awaken the anxious attention of every true patriot; every enlightened statesman; every sincere advocate of suffering humanity; and every intelligent and faithful Christian.”

London affords a strong instance only of the many and urgent wants of this country.

Great Britain is nobly forward in the cause of the cross; but let her not be blinded to the state of nakedness in which she must appear at the last day, if unmindful of her present critical position. Does not this state of things call for renewed energy and devotion in the ministers and people? We bless God for the spirit that now pervades the evangelical portion of the ministry, and look forward to the spreading of the leaven of truth and zeal, until the whole be leavened. What an imposing sight would Great Britain present to the eyes of all the world, if all her members loved and appreciated her beautiful liturgy, because they had felt its healing power on their own souls!

“National impiety and immorality bring national desolation. Every individual should be concerned, lest he help to make up the total of ruin.” How many times did the Lord bear with his people during the forty years in the wilderness; and how often did he spare them for his servant Moses’s sake! In after years, when the promised land had been en-

joyed, and the arm of the Lord forgotten, how often were the people of Israel saved by the prayers of faith! Where is the difference now? Is the Lord changed, his arm shortened, or his ear heavy, or his people's wants less urgent? May every member of the church of Christ be enabled patiently to wait upon the ordinances with that devotion, which a conscientious and spiritual discharge of them requires, forbearing one another in love, and watching unto prayer; searching the scriptures, and modelling themselves by the heavenly spirit of Jesus, which giveth life, and more abundant life. Heresy and schism, with all their minor train of evils, division, secession, separation, in all their varied forms, must quickly disappear from the thoughts and inclinations of all true Bible Christians, in the all-absorbing joy arising from hearts united in love to the blessed Saviour;—harmony would pervade the desires of “the faithful” of every denomination, who would be so far drawn together by the same spirit, as to unite cordially

in every effort, having for its object the glory of God in Christ Jesus.

There does appear to be great cause for gratitude to God, at this time, for differences reconciled, feelings subdued, and hearts softened by grace; and though it is "the day of small things," we cannot but rejoice to observe a gradual approach of the millennial season of holy blessedness! This is the bright side: lest we should imagine that there was nothing remaining for us to do, we must venture to look at the darker shades of the picture, remembering that the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, are still powerfully and successfully exerted on three-fourths of the human race, at least; and that the number of those who reject the power of the gospel altogether, from carelessness, ignorance, and other soul-destroying propensities, diminish, in a fearful degree, the ranks of them *who shall be saved*, out of the number of those who *profess the Christian religion*.

“ Look down, O God ! with pitying eye,
And view the desolation round ;
See what wide realms in darkness lie,
And hurl their idols to the ground.”

Saint John said, “ the whole world lieth in wickedness.” May we not, at this present time, exclaim, in the words of an old and excellent divine, “ This impudent age of ours is grown so eminently uncivil, that it is, now-a-days, counted one of the greatest shames to be ashamed of sin. But, for my part, I had rather be accounted the world's fool, than God's enemy.” Alas ! the wickedness which the Apostle complained of, still exerts a fearful influence on all sides, amidst the strongest glare of gospel light, which has been permitted to shine upon the face of the globe since the Apostolic age.

Let us look around : turn which way so-ever you will, a troubled sea surrounds you ; profession loudly proclaiming the dying state of true religion ; the wide world appears, from shore to shore, at home and abroad, one vast

and undistinguishable mass, rolling fearfully onward with 'accelerated rapidity towards destruction. The people of the world neither see nor hear; they despise the truth, and rush headlong into an abyss too fearful to contemplate; with revolution and atheism at the top, and no rest at the bottom!

In some places superstition and idolatry are gaining ground; heresies, of every shade, are multiplying; fearful divisions are daily arising out of spiritual infidelity; while sect upon sect would determine *neology* to be the characteristic of modern religion.

Notwithstanding what has been done, and is doing, the heathen world is still unchanged: the dotage of papal Rome continues to paralyze all its willing votaries; Germany and France remain a prey to the common enemy; nor is there, in any direction, a single nation that has kept the faith.

If we look at Great Britain we see the shades of darkness all around; the priesthood despised, the people scattered into an hun-

dred sects, sin and Satan encouraged, the establishment assailed, Socinians and papists thriving. Alas! we turn aside from this melancholy sight of our present state, to look at another view,—England in prospective, with sanguine hope that the new era, which is dawning in majesty and power, may be to the glory of God.

“ Sin only hides the genial ray,
And, round the cross, makes night of day.”

The sovereigns of Great Britain have long been defenders of the faith; Queen Elizabeth of gracious memory maintained it, and may we not look forward now with brighter hopes? We have seen that sin has had dominion over us for ages that are past, let us *now* humble ourselves in dust and ashes before the Lord; let us proclaim a solemn fast; yea, let us cry mightily unto God, and turn from the evil of our ways, for “who can tell *if* God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?”

If ever any country or people prospered before the Lord, and could call herself or themselves "*the Lord's*," since the days of Noah, Britain has claim to this undeserved distinction; but alas! how is she fallen; low, prostrate, like the "daughter of Zion," her place knoweth her no more; the sins of church, priesthood,⁴ and people, have consumed her. The bulwark of protestantism is almost thrown down! and, like the temple of Jerusalem, one stone scarce rears its head above another. Oh that the mourning of her Zion, her little flock, might appear in beauty for ashes, in the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness! Then, and not till then, will Satan tremble. Never, while he sees the nation, shepherds and sheep, going on un-

⁴ A.D. 1264, in Fox's Acts and Monuments, vol. ii. p. 559, we find Henry III. addressing the bishop of Hereford on the shepherds that neglected their sheep, "forsaking the church," and damnably despising their charge.

mindful of their high calling,⁵ leaving themselves exposed to ravening wolves, to schism,

⁵ In the work of Dr. F. W. Krummacher, "Elijah the Tishbite," at page 252, in part I. of "the Legacy," explaining the state of preparation for the church of Prussia or Germany, we find these words, viz.—

"It was also a significant circumstance to Elisha, that the official garment he was henceforth to wear was cast to him, as it were, out of the open heavens. What else could he perceive in it, but an immediate investiture and vocation on the part of the living God? And, indeed, every priestly mantle ought to carry the same significance. I mean, that every clergyman, teacher, missionary, or whoever else labours in God's vineyard, ought to be able to say, with Elisha, 'I have received my commission from heaven; my call is of God.' But, in the present day, people commonly make the mantle themselves, esteeming it as an idle tale that any thing should fall from heaven but rain and snow, and looking upon the sacred office of a minister as upon any other profession, which may be taken up at pleasure, or for the sake of a maintenance. The parents decide for their child that he shall be a clergyman. The vain, youthful student, especially if he be conscious of possessing some little talent, immediately thinks himself fit for the sacred office. How many young men proceed to universities to enter upon the study of divinity, without even the most distant

to temptations, spiritual, moral, and political, will he fail to spread the leaven of malice and hatred, until the whole lump be leavened.

Many of our cities, the strongholds of Satan, are buried beneath the load of sin and licentiousness, which pervades them. In vain the

thought of asking counsel of God, in order to learn by the directions of scripture, by circumstances of providence, and their own qualifications, whether it be his will to employ them in the work of the ministry! And when arrived at the university, how seldom do they meet with any pious counsellor, such as Elijah was to Elisha, to take them aside, and inquire whether they had any other proof of their call to the ministry than their own notion and fancy, and the counsel of flesh and blood. Hence it is that we have now the mournful example of many a flock in Christendom, among whom grievous wolves fill the shepherd's office, to the subversion and ruin of souls. Is it then to be wondered at that the common mariner should occasionally seize the helm, when the pilot knows not how to govern the ship? The persecutors of such would do well to consider that they are only opposing what they themselves have contributed to bring into existence."

This extract may cause some to pause and consider; mothers may see it.

evangelical clergy seek to probe with their warning voices these hot-beds of crime ; for such the gospel is preached in vain, it never reaches the seat of evil ; from long neglect the sound of the trumpet is unknown, the shepherds have not fed their flocks, and they are scattered. Woe, woe be unto the people that hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord ! In vain would faithful ministers enter into many towns and houses, the people will not hear ; they mock, despise, and reject what they should rejoice in—the glad tidings of great joy !

Britain no longer is united, no longer is able to protest, as a nation, against the evils that surround her ; yes, melancholy as the truth is, she is fallen ! Is there no cause to fear that she will cease to be a Christian commonwealth ? No apprehension in this day of schism, of heresy, of fanaticism and spiritual wickedness ? Behold the mass of ignorance, blindness of heart, and superstition ; and can any one with all this before their eyes, attempt

to forbid the labours or discourage the efforts of *pious women* ?

'The great and glorious Lord Jehovah calls his people to come and reason with him ;⁶ that, Job-like, they might, at the sight of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, be humbled into abhorrence of themselves, and repent in dust and ashes.⁷ If we turn to the last breathings of the Holy Spirit, under the Jewish dispensation, near four hundred years before the coming of our Saviour, we shall find Malachi complaining of Israel's unkindness, irreligiousness, and profaneness ; reproving the priests for neglecting their covenant, the people for idolatry ; proclaiming the advent, majesty, and grace of Christ ; denouncing the rebellion, sacrilege, and infidelity of the people ; and shewing, in ver. xvi. chap. iii. that a remnant was preserved, and that a blessing was in store for them that fear God. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another ; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was

⁶ Isaiah i. 16—20.

⁷ Job xlii. 1—6.

written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name."

Again, the Lord Jesus declared on the Mount of Olives that the gospel should be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, after which many wonders should appear before the coming of the Son of Man to judge the world.

The parables of the fig tree, the ten virgins, and of the talents, were spoken, admonishing his disciples to watchfulness and diligence; for his sake to feed the hungry, to give drink to the thirsty, to entertain the stranger, to clothe the naked, to visit the sick, and those who are in prison; shewing that they who do these things verily they have their reward, everlasting life.

Are none of these things for us, and for our children, both men and women? Who can look at a vast region "sitting in darkness, and the shadow of death," unaffected, unfeeling, unconcerned?

In speaking of the work to be done, Baxter

says, "Can your neighbours about you witness that you taught them in the fear of the Lord, and warned them not to go to that place of torment?"

"Surely with a compassionate and reflecting mind the condition of the world must excite commiseration and concern. A 'whole world lying in wickedness,'⁸ lying therefore in ruins; the image of God effaced, the presence of God departed! 'Horror hath taken hold of me,' to see the law of him who gave being to the world, so little regarded, so utterly forsaken; so much light and love shining from heaven in vain!.....Are you a believer? then will you consider every man as your brother, and weep to see so many of them around you, crowding the broad road to destruction, and perishing as the miserable victims of their own deceivings. 'The prospect, on every side, is as if God were cast down from his throne, and the creatures of his hand were committing murder against their own souls.....How awful the thought

⁸ 1 John v. 19.

that it ever can be with us a small matter that multitudes are sinking, going down into perdition; with the name of Christ, under the seal of baptism, partakers of the means of gospel grace, yet perishing! Not indeed that we are to yield to a paralyzing feeling of horror, that would awaken no powers of exertion on their behalf. Do we owe them no duty, no prayer, no labour? Shall we look upon souls hurrying on with such dreadful haste to unutterable, everlasting torments, and permit them to rush on, blindfolded, unawakened, unalarmed? Oh! if the love of the Saviour, and the love of souls, were reigning with more mighty influence in our hearts, how much more devoted should we be, in our little sphere of labour, and how much more enlarged in our supplications, until all the kingdoms of Satan were subject to the obedience of the Son of God, and conquered by the force of his omnipotent love..... Blessed Spirit! impart to us more of 'the mind that was in Christ Jesus!'... Help us by

thy gracious influence to plead with sinners for God, and to plead for sinners with God.”⁹

About two hundred years ago there was a great talk of reducing the church to the primitive pattern. “If so, I dare affirm,” said Baxter, “that every church must have many ministers.....What minister can well oversee and watch over more than a thousand souls? nor I think so many. Many congregations have four thousand, ten thousand, twenty thousand, some fifty thousand,—yea, seventy thousand. How many officers will the state maintain in an army of thirty thousand? I had almost said the work of governing the church is greater, and hath need of as many.”

The opinion of the above eminent divine accords with the sentiments of very many experienced Christians of the present day, that no charge ought to exceed one thousand souls; but alas! how many parishes are in almost as destitute a state now as they were in Baxter’s time! And notwithstanding the

⁹ Bridges’s Exposition of Psalm cxix. 53.

continued exertions of good and pious men and women, in contributions of no ordinary magnitude, for the erection of churches and chapels, and the subdividing of extensive parishes, we cannot look forward to any definite period when this laudable spirit might be supposed to be no longer necessary. The demand for exertion is more likely to increase with the growth of religion, than to decrease. What minister could supply the need of *one hundred souls*, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, if they were all languishing on beds of sickness and affliction, requiring daily attendance, some for ghostly advice and counsel, some for spiritual aid of one sort and some for another, while others called for the administration of the sacrament? What could the most devoted servant of God, with the most robust health, and every other requisite for such a charge, be enabled to do in such a case? Are there not many parishes where numbers are always in this state, and where the minister has various other duties of fatigue

to do? Few indeed would be the parishes where the minister could *conscientiously say*, I have discharged my duties for years, and have needed no help; or fewer still the number of cures where the people, one and all, could say, We have reason to bless God for such a teacher, whose pastoral aid has helped us all from the power of Satan to God. No parish or town in the world is without some obstinate transgressors; nor is there any family that has not amongst its dearest relatives, some members "dead in trespasses and sins," some prayerless souls, living without God in the world. Have we no compassionate interest for them? Do we never consider ourselves, lest we should be tempted, and feel a sympathetic grief for the ungodly? Are there none around you, poor and needy, ignorant, and unconverted? It is a glorious work for men and women to enter upon, when we consider who came "to seek and to save poor sinners." We may make light of all trouble, and devote ourselves with the most

earnest and affectionate regard for the immortal souls of all with whom we have to do, since we know "that he who converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death."¹ Thus we see, on all sides, active and intelligent females awakened to a sense of the necessities of immortal souls, breathing out love and affectionate concern for them before their heavenly Father, in secret; and exerting themselves, morning, noon, and night, in the overwhelming prospect of eternity, in prayers that they may turn and live, trying to persuade them to seek an interest in the atonement of Jesus, while time and opportunity remain. And, who, we would ask, could, under such circumstances, pretend to deny, on the one hand, the benefits derived to the poor; or, on the other, the blessings vouchsafed to them that go "about doing good?"

Great Britain, blessed be God, is not alone in female exertion. Russia² has seen a

¹ James v. 20.

² *Vide* Tract, No. 800, of the Religious Tract Society.

princess the happy instrument in turning souls from darkness to light; and has many pious women, at this moment, engaged actively in labours of love, penetrating into places where men could not gain access. "*Sisters of charity*" are also to be met with in many parts of the globe, devoted, zealous agents. Does not Switzerland, and the wider field, America, find ample employment for such fellow-labourers? Many a bright star in glory has ascended from thence; but time and space preclude the possibility of dwelling on this delightful subject longer than appeared necessary to shew to cavillers, that such things are not new in the world, however strange the relation may seem to them. We feel that any attempt to do justice to the efforts of pious women, in the limited space allotted to us, must prove abortive; facts on all sides proclaim the value of their aid far more than all we could say of those "beloved of the Lord" now labouring in the vineyard; and therefore we will, as briefly as possible, glance over,—for all

that we can say can scarce be called "*a glance*,"—at the great work that is now carrying on by ladies. It strikes one with wonder and astonishment to hear of twelve thousand pounds sterling being collected by females, in one year, through the apparently insufficient process of a penny subscription! in the city of London alone—yet so we heard it reported by a minister in Cork, in April last. We have since learnt that associations of ladies have been formed for canvassing the whole metropolis for subscriptions, to be applied to the urgent wants of its dense population, actually perishing for lack of knowledge. "Ladies' Branch" associations have also been formed all over Great Britain, for the purpose of raising funds for the Bible, Reformation, Tract, and other societies—and who but they, so willing, so patient, so gentle, so persevering,—and more than all, so successful? In how many instances have the wives of ministers proved helps meet for them in parochial duties. Have we not daily some conver-

sions, some dying saint's memoirs, or some "living epistle's" good works to rejoice over, and give thanks to God for? Enter into any lowly dwelling in the country, whose inmates have been, or are still in need, and what do you hear? In almost every case, that Mrs. — or Miss — has been so kind, and still is; or that, there is grief for the loss of *her* that visited them. Do you attend on any means of grace beyond the regular worship on the Sabbath? Then look around, and see if there are not *ten* women worshippers for *one* man! Does not this speak volumes? Depend upon it, they that care most for their *own souls*, are fittest to have charge over others. They who are "instant in prayer," and ever waiting to receive the dew from heaven, must necessarily be fed with spiritual food, more than those who "need it not," who never pray for it, or think about such blessings. People cannot bestow what they have not; neither can good be communicated by those whose "thoughts are only evil continu-

ally." Ought not this one characteristic (who can refute it?) to be sufficient to do away with the impression which has been extensively entertained, that women are not fitted for the pious labours they undertake? Even supposing women to be unfitted for pious labours, is there any one, short of an unbeliever, that would dispense with their services? No, no; fit or unfit, they must go on; for few of those who argue against such agency, would be found either proper objects, or willing to replace the fair sex at the bed-sides of the sick.

Thousands are annually brought to a saving knowledge of the Lord through their instrumentality. There is not a town or village of Great Britain that cannot witness to their good works. Schools established, at home and abroad;³ children educated, trained up

³ Witness the "Society for promoting Female Education in China, India, and the East," of which Her Grace the Duchess Dowager of Beaufort is president; which society, conducted by ladies entirely, has sent out eight female agents to labour in India.

to serve the Lord, clothed and provided for ; for every charitable purpose, tending to promote the interests of religion, collections are made ; Dorcas and other provident societies formed ; tracts distributed ; the poor and needy comforted and assisted ; temporal and spiritual wants administered to ; and by whom ? *the women !*

It is scarcely credible, yet too true, that the world abounds with covetous people ; who neither do any of these things themselves, nor would allow others to do them. *They* withhold from the poor, what, in the name of the Lord and Giver of all, they have a just claim to ; forgetting that they are only responsible stewards of the Lord's bounty, and that *he* will require a strict account of their talents.

To mention names, or particularize individual effort, would be impossible, without partiality to some, or great injustice to the majority ; small things would be brought forward to light, while the most noble examples of retired unobtrusive piety would be left in

their pristine obscurity. A day will come, nor is it far from us, in which the cup of cold water⁴ shall not lose its reward; it remains therefore to be proved, by better pages than these, indelibly written in the book of life, which shall be opened on the day of judgment, who are, and who are not, the Lord's people. Only let us remember, "in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be;"⁵ that we may ever live, as we hope to die, on the Lord's side!

If we die in error, we are lost; witness the awful confession of *Voltaire*, who prided himself, while in health and vigour, in the title of "*Apostle of Infidelity*," which *sobriquet* he had earned by his revolutionary and sceptical writings; when on his death bed in great agonies of mind, he exclaimed to his physician, "I am abandoned both by God and man! Doctor!" cried he, "I'll give you half I am worth, if you can give me life six months!" and, upon the doctor telling him he feared he could

⁴ Matthew x. 42.

⁵ Ecclesiastes xi. 3.

not live six weeks, "then," he replied, "I shall go to hell !" and expired soon after.

It is impossible to conclude this part of the book, without an apology for the very imperfect sketch of the labours of love, in which so many of the faithful and virtuous women⁶ of Great Britain are, heart and soul, engaged. To have entered at all into detail, would have occupied a larger space than has been allotted to the subject altogether; nor is it likely that any one person could do justice to such extensive and all-pervading efforts; and therefore, the impracticability being presumed, pardon for the omission will not be denied. This *hiatus* may fairly be concluded under the head of *desiderata*, and from the very nature of it, changing with the leaf from year to year, a want that may not easily be supplied.

⁶ Proverbs xii. 1.

PART II.

Review of scripture, extracts of character, with observations thereon.—Office of deaconess, qualifications and duties; authority for and usefulness of the office.—Great want of help at the present time.

THE holy scriptures were written for “our learning;” they “are able to make us wise unto salvation.”⁷ Shall we then blindly refuse to have recourse to this store-house of saving knowledge; neither searching for the “hidden treasures” ourselves, nor helping others to discover them?

Moses, the first of the inspired penmen of sacred history, was born A. M. 2433, or fifteen hundred and seventy-one years before the advent of the Messiah; he “*was* an hundred and twenty years old when he died; his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.”⁸

There arose not a prophet like unto Moses,

⁷ 2 Timothy iii. 15.

⁸ Deuteronomy xxxiv. 7.

whom "the Lord knew face to face;" neither after him was there any to be compared unto him, until the promised Seed of the woman⁹ came. Moses wrote the pentateuch, a work every way fitted for the wants of the age he lived in, and worthy of its divine author; inferior only to the brighter light of the New Testament, the law and gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Under the Jewish dispensation, we find recorded many valuable acts of faith; of Sarah, who was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised; "of women who received their dead raised to life again; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection."¹ Yet these had not received the promises which were provided for us by a new covenant, "the blood of sprinkling," which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. How careful need we be to "follow peace with all, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord!"

⁹ Genesis iii. 14.

¹ Hebrews xi. 35.

Forgetting the law of Moses, and setting at nought the counsel of the Lord, the idolatry and wickedness of the people of Israel had arisen to such a pitch, about thirteen hundred years before Christ, that they were well nigh destroyed: there were a few that had not bowed the knee to Baal; and *the Lord* was not willing that any should perish for their sake. He still loved his people, for whose deliverance he raised up

DEBORAH, the prophetess that dwelt on Mount Ephraim, and judged Israel at that time. Such was the dejected state of the Jews at this period, that when "the mother in Israel" sent for Barak, and told him that the Lord God had commanded to take ten thousand men to fight with Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army, which should be delivered into his hand; the courage of Barak failed him! His want of faith was so pitiable, that he refused to go unless the prophetess accompanied him. In vain she told him the journey would not be for his honour; neither

was it, for Sisera died by the hand of a woman ! in that day when the Lord made Deborah to have dominion over the mighty.²

When Joab, David's victorious general, had pitched his camp over against the town of Abel,³ and would have destroyed it for harbouring Sheba, we find the city preserved by the address and advice of "*a wise woman*," which caused the rebel's head to be cast over the walls. Of this despised and neglected woman, Solomon says,⁴ "wisdom is better than weapons of war."

The queen of Sheba came to Solomon, with a very great company, and camels that bare spices, and gold in abundance, and precious stones; and communed with him of all that was in her heart.⁵ May we not discover in all this pomp something typical of the Gentile sinner coming to Christ in his own righteousness? In the easy access she obtains, is there

² Judges iv. 5, 13. ³ 2 Samuel xx. 16—22. B. C. 1022.

⁴ Ecclesiastes ix. 14—18.

⁵ 2 Chronicles ix. 1—9. B. C. 992.

nothing in the effect produced upon her mind at the sight of Solomon's glory, and the unsatisfying nature of earthly things, to be compared to the confusion of the newly-awakened sinner on beholding the glory of his Redeemer? She blessed God for the happiness she had witnessed, and confessed it far exceeded her most sanguine expectations. In Solomon's liberality to her at parting, is there no type of the grace and bounty of the Lord Jesus to those who cast their burdens upon him? This queen was no pagan, for the Saviour speaks of her with praise, pointing her out as an example to the Jews, in Matt. xii. 42; Luke xi. 31. She was evidently actuated by a wish to serve her people, in bringing home to Egypt the essence of the wisdom and laws of the king of Jerusalem.

In 1 Kings xvii. 8—24, the faith of the poor *widow of Zarephath* is set forth for our example. 2 Kings iv. 18—38, contain an account of the *good Shunammite*, who was, through faith, under the afflicting loss of her only child, enabled to say, "*It is well.*"

Upwards of nine hundred years after Moses, honourable mention is made in the scriptures⁶ of HULDAH, the prophetess, who dwelt in the college or school in Jerusalem; she foretels the calamities that soon after befel Judah, and doubtless, on many occasions, warned the stiff-necked people. The last female which we shall notice, from the pages of the Old Testament, is *Belshazzar's queen-mother*,⁷ NITOCRIS, a woman of great capacity and reputation, whose active and prudent management had been for some time the stay of the empire. Her advice was good, but, alas! it came too late—"In that night was Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, slain." How exactly does this scripture seem to have its parallel in Matt. xxvii. 19, where the wife of Pontius Pilate warned him to let the Saviour go; where also the governor was overruled by the same wise and almighty hand! In all these cases, there are no particulars given, characteristic of Jewish life, in the early ages of history: beyond the ample provisions which

⁶ 2 Chronicles xxxiv. 22—28.

⁷ Daniel v. 10—12.

the laws of Moses made for the poor and needy, it was not necessary for the holy men of old to be moved to speak. Want of space precludes the mention of many pious and devoted women, whose names are recorded in the Lamb's book of life; indeed, time would fail us to tell of ELIZABETH, wife of Zacharias; MARY, the mother of Jesus; MARY, the mother of Mark, into whose house the Apostles retired after the ascension of our Lord, and where they received the Holy Ghost; [Epiphanius says, this house was on Mount Zion, escaped the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, and was turned into a church, continuing several ages]—of LOIS and EUNICE, the grandmother and mother of Timothy; of the great faith of the Syro-Phœnician woman;⁸ of MARY, wife of Cleophas, mother of James the less, and of Simon, brethren of our Lord; of MARY and MARTHA, sisters of Lazarus; of MARY MAGDALENE; or of many other faithful and devout women, that followed our blessed Saviour, even to the end! of whom it

⁸ Mark vii. 25—30.

may be said, no human tongue could half express their merit.

Chateaubriand was asked by Fontanes if he could assign a reason why the women of the Jewish race were so much handsomer than the men? to which he gave the following truly poetical as well as Christian reply :—
“The Jewesses,” said he, “have escaped the curse which has alighted upon their fathers, husbands, and sons. Not a Jewess was to be seen among the crowd of priests and the rabble who insulted the Son of God, scourged him, crowned him with thorns, and subjected him to ignominy and the agony of the cross. The women of Judea believed in the Saviour; they loved and followed him; they assisted and soothed him under afflictions. A woman of Bethany poured on his head the precious ointment, which she kept in a vase of alabaster; the sinner anointed his feet with perfumed oil, and wiped them with her hair. Christ, on his part, extended his grace and mercy to the Jewesses; he raised from the

dead the son of the widow of Nain, and Martha's brother, Lazarus; he cured Simon's mother-in-law, and the woman who touched the hem of his garment. To the Samaritan woman he was a spring of living water; and a compassionate judge to the woman taken in adultery.

"The daughters of Jerusalem wept over him; the holy women accompanied him to Calvary, brought balm and spices, and weeping sought him at the sepulchre. 'Woman, why weepest thou?' His first appearance after his resurrection was to Mary Magdalene. He said to her, 'Mary!' At the sound of his voice, Mary Magdalene's eyes were opened, and she answered, 'Master!' The reflection of some beautiful ray must have rested on the brow of the Jewess!"

Proceeding with the scripture characters of the New Testament, we come to

TABITHA, a Christian disciple, who lived at Joppa, full of good works, alms-deeds, and labours of love, "being filled with the fruits of

righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God," (which becometh women professing godliness) by interpretation called Dorcas.⁹ This woman fell sick and died, was washed and laid in an upper chamber, surrounded by many saints and widows, weeping for their loss, and shewing the coats and garments which they had received from her while alive; when Peter, coming in the power of the Holy Ghost, put all of them forth of the chamber, kneeled down, and prayed,—and shortly after restored her to her friends, who gave glory to God for the miraculous restoration; while many believed from that time in the Lord.

“She was a peculiar ornament to the gospel, which she had embraced; for she so abounded in good works and alms-deeds, that her whole life was a continued succession of them, as a tree is full of fruit, when every branch is loaded with it. She not only gave away her substance, but she employed her time and skill in labouring diligently and constantly for the

poor widows and other believers; so that her death was considered as a public loss. Many seem to think that none can glorify Christ, or help to promote his gospel, except ministers: but such persons as Tabitha are as much wanted, and are as useful in their places, even as able faithful preachers: for while the latter proclaim the truths of the gospel by their word; the other substantiate, illustrate, and demonstrate the excellency of them in their lives. How mean then is the grovelling ambition of those numerous females, who aspire to no higher distinction, than that of external personal decoration and accomplishment, and who waste their lives in trifling pursuits; when multiplied charities and labours of love might have rendered them, at less expense of time and treasure, a blessing to multitudes, and an ornament to Christianity! When such triflers die, all die with them, and their loss is not greatly felt or lamented; while even such as have had little in their power, and have 'laboured, working with their own hands,' that

they might relieve the poor and needy, will be substantially useful through life, and sincerely lamented at death ; their ‘ works follow them,’ and will be graciously rewarded in heaven.”¹

LYDIA, a certain woman, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira,² which worshipped God ; whose heart the Lord opened, to attend to the things spoken by Paul ; she and all her house were baptized ; she constrained Paul and Silas to make her house their home, devoting herself and her household to their service : This happened at Philippi, a colony and city of Macedonia, where the gospel was first preached in Europe, though it is probable the church at Rome was planted considerably before this time. It seems they had no synagogue, nevertheless Paul abode here discoursing and preaching *to the women*, that resorted to a small oratory without the city by the river side, where prayer *was wont to be made*. It was at this place also that Paul cast out

¹ Rev. T. Scott.

² Acts xvi. 14—40.

the Pythonic spirit from the damsel whose master used the Apostle shamefully.

CLAUDIA, the lady mentioned by Paul, in 2 Timothy iv. 21, is supposed by many to have been the wife of Aulus Rufus Pudens, mentioned by Martial, [Epig. 13, lib. iv. lib. xi. 54] who speaks of her as a British lady of extraordinary virtue, wit, and beauty; a convert to Paul's ministry at Rome,—or which is less probable, as some have it, of Aristobulus,³ who, according to modern Greeks, was brother to Barnabas, and one of the seventy disciples, ordained bishop, and sent into Britain, A. D. 59, where he laboured much, and made many converts, of whom some were carried captive to Rome. POMPONIA GRÆCINA, an illustrious Christian lady, who accompanied her husband during his residence in Britain, from A. D. 43 to A. D. 47, was the wife of Aulus Plautius, the first *governor of a Roman province* in Great Britain. She was accused of *having embraced a strange foreign superstition*, was tried for her life and fame, but honourably

³ Romans xvi. 10.

acquitted! This took place before Paul's first visit to Rome, A. D. 59, and therefore she may not unreasonably be supposed to have been a convert contemporary with Aquila and Priscilla, who left Rome, by order of Claudius the emperor, who died A. D. 54; before which time the Christian religion had made such progress in that capital, as to engage the attention of the government, and led to the expulsion of all Christians, about the year 53, as would appear by Acts xviii. 1, 2. Tacitus, the Roman historian, speaks of this incident in a way that leaves very little doubt on the mind of any unbiassed Christian, that this lady was one of the very first who brought the knowledge of Christ into Great Britain, and not a pagan idolater like himself.

Saint Paul, in his epistle to the Romans about this time, which he sent by the hand of Phœbe, the deaconess, makes mention of TRYPHENA and TRYPHOSA, "who labour in the Lord." Some years after, (A. D. 62) in writing from Rome to the church at Philippi

in Macedonia, planted by the Apostle about ten years before, he salutes all the saints that had contributed to his wants, and testifies much feeling for their warm attachment to him: he assures them of the favour of God, and good wishes of all the saints at Rome, "chiefly they that are of Cæsar's household." He calls upon the church to "help those women which laboured with him in the gospel," iv. 3; and in chap. i. 27 prays them to "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel."

Women are the weaker vessels, and as such claim the protection and affectionate consideration of their natural guardians, by whom they are to be held in honour: they were not made to rule, but to be subject to man. The prophet Isaiah mourns over the state of the people Israel, reduced by sins of omission and commission to the weakness of women. He points out in the sure word of prophecy what such spiritual apostacy must lead to,⁴ "and she being desolate shall sit upon the ground."

⁴ Isaiah iii. 26.

History, upwards of eight hundred years after it was spoken, shews the exact fulfilment of this prediction ; for medals were struck on the conquest of Judea by the Romans, bearing the representation of the “ daughter of Zion ” sitting under a palm tree, in a mournful attitude !

The Apostle Paul tells us that wives should submit themselves ; and forbids women to speak or *teach* in the church ; or to appear there uncovered, or without veils, 1 Cor. xi. 5 and xiv. 34. Peter recommends modesty to them,⁵ with great care in avoiding superfluous ornaments. See also 1 Tim. ii. 8—15 on the same subject.

There is nothing contained in these instructions, that forbids the exercise of every charitable feeling that may arise in the breasts of women ; so long as they do not neglect their home concerns, or interfere “ *in those matters* ” wherein obedience is required by the word of God to constituted authority—of the church especially.

David said that he had desired of the Lord

⁵ 1 Peter iii. 1—3.

one thing, which through grace he was determined to seek after with all his might, even though an host should encamp against him, or war rise up; he was determined to persevere, and having avouched the Lord to be his light and salvation, he felt his faith sustained, and had no fears for the result.

The "*one thing needful*" was, that he might dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of his life, to behold the beauty, or delight, of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple. David waited daily upon the Lord, who was his strength, and believed that he should be lifted up to dwell in the house of the Lord for ever. Jesus, while sojourning a guest at the house of Martha, [to whom, her sister Mary, and brother Lazarus, he was much attached] told her that she was careful and troubled about many things, and that her sister Mary had chosen that good part, "which," says Jesus, "shall not be taken from her."⁶ He did not order Mary to rise up and assist her sister in the domestic affairs, as we might have supposed

⁶ Luke x. 42.

he would have done; he merely remarked, "*But one thing is needful,*" and Mary continued to sit at the Saviour's feet, drinking deeply of the gracious truths that dropped as manna from his adored lips; while poor Martha, still cumbered about much serving, remained at the post of active duties. Some months afterwards, Martha, still on the alert, meets Jesus before he entered Bethany, whither he had come to shew forth the glory of God in raising Lazarus from the dead; and Mary sat *still* in the house, until she was aroused from her grief by the intelligence that the Christ the Son of God had come. She got up hastily, and having arrived where he was, fell at his feet with the same expression of faith as Martha had used,⁷ with more apparent humility and self-abasement. Six days before the passover, when Mary anointed the feet of Jesus with the costly spikenard, Martha still served!

The love of Jesus to this family was very great, but in no place do we find that he pre-

⁷ John xi. 21, 32.

ferred one before the other. He loved them all; nor can we suppose that his reply to Martha was intended as a rebuke, in the sense that some have imagined; it could only be the chastisement of love, to bring her nearer to himself. Some one must have attended to those duties which fell to Martha's lot; the Saviour knew this, and made no remark upon it, and was evidently anxious to set the minds of both sisters at rest, that being content with their respective stations, they might maintain a prayerful spirit; looking unto Jesus, the only way of salvation, the Altar, Offering, High-Priest of every sacrifice acceptable to God! A minister once remarked, "God will not accept upon his altar one duty as a sacrifice, when he sees it stained with the blood which flows from the sacrifice of another duty;" and BURKITT says, "The practice of moral duties is required before sacrifice, and is more acceptable to Almighty God than the most solemn acts and exercises of instituted worship whatsoever." In this life our duties to God

and our neighbours involve so many claims, that their fulfilment excludes all selfish cares; we cannot find time to make difficulties, if we seek, as we are commanded to do, in the study of the scriptures, and teaching from Jesus, the guidance of the Spirit of truth. "In making exchange of the world for God, and the services of sin for the ways of heaven, we shall find no room left for regret in life, in death, or in eternity. The darkest hour of the believer is ten thousand times brighter than the brightest day of the ungodly."

They refuse to listen to the voice of truth, that would guide them to the Saviour. He never instructs us to leave undone those things which in our several stations it is the duty of the Christian especially to do well; or in any wise, to neglect that looking inwards, to see that the heart is truly disciplined in all temperance and patient godliness; for out of such hearts only can good fruit come, or light shine, to the glory of God.

Those who are waiting for the coming of

the Saviour, must keep their houses in order, that they may be ready to give in their account to Him who judgeth the quick and the dead; in every action so ordering themselves as if Christ were on the one hand and death on the other; the bent of the soul being to *him*, whom to love for himself and to know, is everlasting life.

Let not any one imagine that our relative and domestic duties are set aside by the putting on of Christ: far from it. All who make any profession must hold it fast, else looking back they be deemed unfit and rejected from heaven at last. In all cases Christians must do their duty; even where friends and relatives, or masters, do not do their duty, the Christian can in no wise be wanting in duty to them.

A valued friend, to whom the author feels indebted, strongly recommended a reference to some of the numerous examples of female piety and usefulness, which on all sides are to be met with, in this age of publication.

Amongst others, to the lives of Mrs. Judson and Harriet Newell, to be found in the Christian Biography of the Religious Tract Society. But this does not lie within the range of the author's object, which is not so much to essay to speak of existing or past examples, as to urge forward some *now* loiterers, whose names may be bright as the stars here, and among the glorified saints hereafter. The author did not, when he commenced this work at first, suppose he should have exceeded a dozen pages; but as he has already wandered far from his original view of the subject, he must leave the difficult task of drawing character to some one better qualified to handle so delicate a subject.

Had it been intended to exclude women from all participation in the affairs of religion, it is not probable that Paul could have used such expressions towards them. He might have felt personally grateful for many kindnesses received at their hands, and still unable, however much in accordance with his

own wishes, to write by inspiration, "the volumes," that are contained in so few words; comprehensive indeed they appear to be. Let us consider the case of

PRISCA, or PRISCILLA, a Christian woman that had fled with her husband Aquila, from the persecution in Italy to Corinth, where Paul met them;⁸ and having abode some time in their house, became attached to, and took them with him to Ephesus, where he remained some time on business, and then left them to be present at Jerusalem during the feast. Their house was so thoroughly Christianized, that Paul calls it a church. On one occasion they took Apollos unto them, "and expounded the way of God more perfectly." Now this Apollos was a Jew of Alexandria, a mighty man in the scriptures, and eloquent; nevertheless, Priscilla was enabled, by the Spirit of God, to edify him. Paul calls them, "My helpers in Christ Jesus, who have for my life laid down their necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the

⁸ Acts xviii. 2.

Gentiles." "Likewise greet the church that is in their house."⁹ To Timothy he says, "Salute Prisca and Aquila."¹ And again, "Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house."² Vide Col. iv. 15, where also Nymphas' house is called.....a church ;³ and Philemon, where it also occurs.

We see from the above, that Priscilla was a helper of the Apostle Paul ; and how ? Dr. Macknight tells us, *in spreading the gospel*.⁴ Scripture says, "*they expounded*." And can we doubt, that excellent wisdom and an ex-

⁹ Rom. xvi. 3, 4, 5. ¹ 2 Tim. iv. 19. ² 1 Cor. xvi. 19.

³ ["*The church that is in their house ;*" that is, their Christian family. The phrase seems to signify a family consisting wholly of Christian converts, as was the jailor's, Acts xvi. 31, 32 ; and that of Crispus, Acts xviii. 8. When the family was not entirely converted, the Apostle uses a different phrase. See Rom. xvi. 10, 11, 14, 15 ; Col. iv. 15.—DR. WHITBY.]

⁴ [Priscilla and Aquila, both at Corinth and Ephesus, *had been very active in spreading the gospel*, and had undergone the greatest perils for the Apostle.—DR. MACK-NIGHT.]

cellent spirit guided every act? It is plain that we have before us an example of one of the brightest Christians whose light has shone before men, to the honour and glory of God. It is no mean title to be "*helper in Christ Jesus,*" to such a man as Paul, who doubtless found her perfect in practice of every good work, and complete in all the will of God. She who had provided so carefully for the comfort and support of the Apostle, could never have left the equally important matters of the poor, spiritual and temporal, neglected. We cannot suppose for a moment that she loved Paul only, or that *he could love* one, who had left all the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith, undone.

"A wicked opinion having sprung up, even in the Apostle's days, by misunderstanding Paul's arguments; Peter, John, James, and Jude, aimed in their epistles principally at this end, to vindicate the doctrine of Paul from the false consequences charged upon it, and to shew that 'faith without works is nothing

worth.' But indeed Paul does not speak of faith at large, but only of that living, fruitful, and evangelical faith, which, he says, 'worketh by love.' As for that faith, void of good works, which these men thought sufficient to salvation, he declareth positively against it. Peter calls it *wresting*;⁵ because Paul was in truth of the same opinion with the other Apostles, and held eternal life impossible to be attained by any faith, which had not the attestation of a holy life."⁶

PHOEBE, a deaconess of the church in the eastern port of Corinth, Cenchrea, was a woman of some property; went to Rome on important business, the bearer of Paul's epistle to the Romans, and evidently enjoyed much of the Apostle's confidence; for he styles her, "our sister, which is a servant of the church, which is at Cenchrea,.....for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also."⁷ [*A servant*—in the quality of deaconess, as some think; or as others, who spent her time in hospitably entertaining poor Christians; and who

⁵ Peter iii. 16.

⁶ Augustine.

⁷ Romans xvi. 1.

had been a succourer and supporter of the Apostle himself.—BURKITT.]

The word here rendered *servant*, is *διακονον*; elsewhere, *minister*, Rom. xiii. 4; or *deacon*, 1 Tim. iii. 8. Phœbe was therefore in the church as *deaconess*, whose duty it was to assist at baptisms, privately instruct those of their own sex, and visit those imprisoned for the faith. Dr. Whitby adds, “to attend those who were sick and in labour.” St. Paul says in 1 Tim. v. 9, 10, the qualifications were, for widows, to be not less than sixty years of age, “having been wife of one man, well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints’ feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work;”—such only to be chosen to the office. Widows indeed, desolate, [i. e. destitute of relations to relieve her—PYLE] such only as “trust in God and continue in supplication and prayer night and day.” Surely this is no mean office?

[In process of time it appears virgins also were made deaconesses. Their business was, to baptize women, teach female catechumens, to visit and attend upon the sick, to administer to martyrs, and to perform other inferior services of the church.—SCHLEUSNER.]

The Apostolic constitutions, as they are called, mention the ordination of a deaconess, and the form of prayer used on that occasion : [see lib. viii. chap. 19, 20.] Primitive Christians were led into the practice of ordering deaconesses, from, as far as we are able to see, the readiness of women, at all times, to devote themselves to the service of the Redeemer : no danger appalled, or difficulty overcame, the pious exertions of the genuine converts ; and although in times of persecution the greatest fury fell upon them, ill able from their advanced age to bear it, they did not shrink from their duty under the infliction of the greatest tortures⁸ that human cruelty could invent. The office was afterwards found of the greatest use, as the church took wider ranges, to afford

⁸ See Account of Martyrs.

entertainment for the travelling ministers, such as should at once be fitted for them, and trustworthy.

“Is it not remarkable that this office, which is so well adapted to the matronly character of the female sex, should be *wholly* excluded from our list of assistants in the church?”—
CALMET.]

Pliny the younger, who died A. D. 113, evidently referred to the office of deaconess, when, in his epistle x. 97, 98, to Trajan, he mentions having put to the torture two female Christians, “*quæ ministræ dicebantur.*” It was through his solemn declaration to the Emperor, that the followers of Christ were a meek and inoffensive set of people, of pure and innocent morals, and free from all crimes, that the dreadful persecutions, which had been so long carried on, were put an end to for a time.

Paul says Phœbe had been *his patroness*, which implies a dignity seldom considered; it shews that the station was one of honour and great respectability; indeed no one can

attentively consider the qualifications for the office in all their bearings, without at once discarding the idea of their being *door-keepers* or *pew-openers only*, as some assert. Nay, it is evident that all the pious women whose names are held up as lights to a benighted world, were no other than true and faithful followers of the law and gospel. Alms-giving and love pervaded all their operations. If we search the scriptures, we shall find, from beginning to end, alms-giving recommended; rewards held out to the charitable, while punishments are denounced against those that neglect such works: in preference to the idle, the pious and deserving are to be the objects supported; every man giving according to his ability, cheerfully and speedily, without ostentation, from love to God and respect for his commandments. Love, of God to men, and of men to God; of brethren, of Christ, or of his inestimable love to us, is strongly portrayed; nor does there appear any *love* that may not be encouraged, except that of *the*

world, and the things of the world, and this is death, death eternal! For “if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” Now *he* was the person whom *Jehovah* had anointed to preach the gospel to the poor, [*vide* Isaiah lxi. 1, compared with Luke iv. 18] of which passages Bishop Porteus says, “we, who have no such prejudices and passions as the Jews had to mislead our judgment, know that our Lord most completely verified the words of the prophet, [and evangelist] both in their literal and their spiritual meaning.” See then the position of *that man* who would dare, in this our day, to curtail one iota of the glad tidings to the poor, by attempting to check the labours of pious women.

Who can have failed to observe the “work of grace” on the minds of the illiterate? Though uncultivated and barren before the Spirit of truth convinced them, they have sprung up and “blossomed as the rose;” they become a wonder to themselves, and more so to them that knew them in their ignorance;

speaking the beautiful language of the Bible, and in scripture terms, they seem to have ascended in the scale of intellect, and are no doubt restored in some degree "in renewal of knowledge, to the image of *Him* that created them"⁹ "in Christ Jesus unto good works."¹ Remember that it is only in this world the poor man is degraded; his humble station on earth excludes him, it is true, from the society and pleasures of the rich and great, but there is a crown of glory laid up for the faithful, which none can rob him of; and if he endure to the end, the poor man here may be rich hereafter; he may sit down with Abraham, the fellow of angels and glorified saints! standing for ever in the presence of his Redeemer and his God, partaking of those pleasures which flow from *his* throne, and are at *his* right hand, throughout all ages!

"Remember ye the law of Moses," Malachi iv. 4. Probably nothing was ever written in so small a compass, so accurately to express

⁹ Colossians iii. 10.

¹ Ephesians ii. 10.

the typical nature of the Levitical ordinances,
as the following verses of the poet Cowper.

“ Israel, in ancient days,
Not only had a view
Of Sinai in a blaze,
But learn'd the gospel too :
The types and figures were a glass,
In which they saw a Saviour's face.
The paschal sacrifice,
And blood-besprinkled door,
Seen with enlightened eyes,
And once applied with power,
Would teach the need of other blood,
To reconcile the world to God.
The lamb, the dove, set forth
His perfect innocence,
Whose blood of matchless worth
Should be the soul's defence ;
For he who can for sin atone,
Must have no failings of his own.
The scape-goat on his head
The people's trespass bore,
And, to the desert led,
Was to be seen no more :
In him our Surety seem'd to say,
Behold, I bear your sins away.

Dipt in his fellow's blood,
The living bird went free :
The type well understood,
Express'd the sinner's plea ;
Described a guilty soul enlarg'd,
And by a Saviour's death discharg'd.

Jesus, I love to trace,
Throughout the sacred page,
The footsteps of thy grace,
The same in every age :
O grant that I may faithful be,
To clearer light vouchsafed to me !"

The above lines describe the sinner's only plea, "Without blood there is no remission."² We know this, but many do not. And shall not every Christian be anxious to teach poor ignorant dying souls to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly and godly here, looking unto Him, who shall appear to all that fear his name, "the second time without sin unto salvation?" Deaconesses did this, depend upon it. And it is no small matter of regret that an order, so well calculated to benefit any community, should have been wholly

² Hebrews ix. 22—25.

laid aside, and that too, after a thousand years' experience of its utility. It was not abolished every where at once, for it continued in the Greek church longer than in the Latin, and some of the Latin churches retained the office much longer than others. It had not entirely disappeared until the commencement of the twelfth century. Many noble martyrs sealed with their blood, the testimony which their lives had borne to the truth. They never hesitated to take up their crosses in the face of death itself; for the grave had no terrors for them, the sting being removed by the sure and certain hope of the "better resurrection." When the female martyr Agatha was upbraided, because, being descended of an illustrious parentage, she stooped to mean and humble offices; "Our nobility," she replied, "lies in this, that we are the servants of Christ." In this reply she shewed the extent of her love, "even unto death;" acknowledging the blessed Redeemer as the end of all her hopes, her "wisdom, righteousness, sanctifica-

tion, and redemption ;” her “ all in all.” We may discover in the passages of holy writ, which have been brought forward in this chapter, that there is no want of authority for female labourers in the vineyard. Nay more, that they have even in some instances been called upon, in times of great trouble and difficulty in Israel, to set the national affairs in order ; that they acted in particular cases as judges, as directors of armies, and expounders of divine truth ; and in the latter days, as succourers and helpers of the Apostles, by divine authority. In all this, we can only lament, that they no longer minister by authority, because it appears to us, that their help is quite as necessary now as it was in the Apostolic age, when the number of those inquiring the way to Zion was limited.

PART III.

All Christians called to be lay-agents.—Privileges of Women of Great Britain.—Hints respecting Duties.—Personal Holiness necessary to Labours of Love.—Concluding Prayer.

THE subject of lay-agency must now engross our consideration. *We* cannot commence the handling of this important branch of our work; it would be presumptuous in us to attempt so difficult a task, and therefore we have taken the liberty of quoting from a speech, by the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Chester, on behalf of the Pastoral-Aid Society, as reported in the London City Mission Magazine for July, 1837. "He now came to a point that some might think not unexceptionable, viz. the employment of persons unordained. This is matter of necessity. He never imagined it would be possible for the church to supply sufficient assistance; the more the

spiritual want of the people was considered, the greater would be found to be the extent of the assistance which was required. The Society proposed to supply this defect, in part, by affording means for the employment of suitable laymen, when the incumbent desires it. In this, however, they must not be, and were not, led by expediency to violate a principle. He therefore came to the question which might be asked, Could a layman be properly employed to supply this spiritual want? Is an unordained person to preach the gospel? The Right Rev. Prelate said, in answer, he should refer to the Articles of the Church, and was thankful to a church which gave him articles to refer to. In the twenty-third article we read, 'It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching, or ministering the sacraments in the congregation, before he be lawfully called and sent to execute the same,' &c. The question was, therefore, answered so far by the article. But having met that question, he would ask

another : May no person converse on religious subjects, except he be ordained? Now to this the articles furnish no answer; but he would refer to another standard, higher even than the articles, though never opposed to them. We find from scripture that there are many things connected with religion, which all Christians are allowed, nay, bound to do. They may 'exhort.' The Apostle Paul says, 'Exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day.' They may 'warn one another.'— 'Warn the unruly.' Therefore, the layman may warn those whom he sees pursuing a conduct contrary to the doctrine they profess. Christians are also to 'comfort one another,' and this with the highest grounds of consolation. The Apostle James even gives it as a definition of pure and undefiled religion, that we comfort the fatherless and widow in their affliction. And how can persons in the greatest depths of earthly sorrow be comforted, without entering with them *into the most spiritual parts of our holy religion*? Now if this

be enjoined on Christians—if it be lawful for them to act on these injunctions, singly or individually, it must still remain so when applied to a body,” &c. [Here the Right Rev. Prelate approves of lay-agents, employed by the Church Pastoral-Aid Society, in this “work and labour of love.”]

In further approval, we quote from the sermon of the Hon. and Rev. B. Nøel, A. M., on behalf of the City Mission, viz. “I need not remind you, that, in the first and purest age of the church, under Apostolic sanction, did the whole church at Jerusalem, when scattered by persecution, go forth to do this very work, and to carry ‘from house to house’ the knowledge of ‘the unsearchable riches of Christ Jesus,’ when there were none else to do it. In darker ages that good habit was lost; and when men were shut out from the knowledge of the scriptures, and knew not the way of salvation;—when they were excluded from education too, and had no cultivation of their faculties;—when ecclesiastical usurpations

were innumerable ; and when, under the influence of superstition, the whole visible church of Christ had sunk into a profound lethargy, so that men knew not where, if their minds were at all enlightened, to look for the spiritual Israel, for the people of God ; then, (worthy the darkness of those miserable times !) did men forget their duty, and devolve upon the priesthood, as though it were alone their office, the work of endeavouring to save souls from hell. But, thanks be to God, we live in a better day. Spiritual light has revisited the church of Christ ; and now you know the way to heaven—you know the wants of your fellow-men—you know the steps by which a soul must climb to glory ; and will you leave only to us the blessed office of making men ‘ wise unto salvation ?’ For myself, I thank God, as for the best of the blessings he has given me, that it is my duty to spend my whole life in telling men of this glorious salvation. But, why should it be left to those who are ministers of Christ alone ? If you have leisure to com-

municate it, and if you have the knowledge to impart it, how can you be exempt from responsibility before God, which the mere possession of that knowledge involves?" The same gentleman observes, at another time and place, "We can all tell what we know. Is not the gospel simple enough, for a good man to be able to convey the knowledge of it to his fellow-men? God has given a revelation of his will, which is intended to save men; to save all that will come to him by faith; to save from sin and from the slavery of Satan, the poor and the ignorant, no less than the rich and the learned. Would it not be monstrous to suppose that a revelation, delivered to us with such an intention, should be so constructed, that none but the learned could comprehend it? What said our Saviour? 'I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes.'" Much more might have been brought forward from similar sources, point-

ing the same way, to the imperious necessity for individual effort. O let us not any longer remain inactive, careless observers of what is passing around us; let us not any longer say, "to-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant;"⁴ for who can tell if he shall even see the light of another day? Let us not, as some do, confine the sin of unbelief to Jews, Mahomedans, and pagans; to atheists, deists, and sceptics; but let us feel for such as profess to believe the gospel, but who in reality deny the power of it, and imagine that the amiable qualities of compassion and benevolent kindness, are sufficient to carry them through this world and make them happy hereafter. Let us feel for such amiable characters, and try by every effort of persuasion and Christian charity, to win them to a better obedience. If the richer branches of the community, whose wants, according to the teaching of Jesus, are most urgent, are to be reached by any human instrumentality, where shall we find agents, fitted for this delicate office,

⁴ Isaiah lvi. 12.

except it be amongst the number of those enlightened females, with whom Great Britain abounds? The ministers of Christ even, have not always the same facilities in the ranks of nobility and wealth, as the ladies have. Let “as many as have received *Him*,” consider their duties. It is not the poor only, but the rich, who require to be warned of their danger. Many pious females may here be enabled to exert their influence for good, where no other description of agent, short of a voice from heaven, could excite attention. If once aroused to listen to the word of truth, their faith may be established.

Contrast the privileges of the women of this happy country with those of almost any other nation in the world; shall we not have much cause for thankfulness to the Giver of every good and perfect gift? The more we know of the state of other countries, the greater will be our gratitude. What would the delicate females of this western world think of being prisoners and slaves in their husbands' houses,

without any intercourse with the rest of mankind?—not permitted to speak to men, being obliged to retire at the announcement of such visitors?—of being treated as having no souls, no hope?—eating the scraps left by the husband?—children destroyed at birth or drowned, in hope of going to bliss? Alas! such is the strange delusion in offerings made to Satan, of daily occurrence in India. Perhaps, after the manner of the “Weaver caste,” they would prefer being buried alive, and see their own *dear* children *devotedly* heaping on, and treading down the earth to suffocate them; and why?—because their husband was dead: or burned alive for the same reason, and made a *suttee*! or worse than all, *devoured*! for this is the unnatural practice of the inhabitants of Ombaye, an island in the Eastern Archipelago. When old and decrepid, unable to provide for themselves, their relations proclaim a feast! But this, though true, is too horrible a recital: many apologies are necessary for its introduction: the object is to stimulate the females of

Great Britain to speak the word to every soul they love ; to raise the funds : they must prevail ! Let all these graves be closed for ever, the fires extinguished, and infants saved, through the instrumentality of their united efforts ! What may not women do ?

Be careful in all things humbly to consider yourself, and walk circumspectly in every relation of life, lest, forgetting your own weakness, you should attempt any thing in your own strength : and failing to lay hold of the “ anchor of the soul,” make shipwreck of a good conscience. We must fear God continually, but man never. How could we intentionally offend so good, so gracious a Being as our God ? Solomon tells us, “ The fear of man bringeth a snare ;⁵ a trap of “ the fowler,”⁶ to kill our hopes ; such as the proud laid for David, when Saul compassed his steps ; and which we must try to avoid, by speaking out, when the fear of man only prevents us.—“ A word in season, how good it is !” “ Yea, and *all that will live godly in Christ Jesus*, shall

⁵ Prov. xxix. 25.

⁶ 1 Tim. iii. 7.

suffer persecution.”⁷ We must therefore be careful, lest the “derision of the proud” should move us. Let us not mind any of these things; but by a steady and persevering course in the path of duty, continue faithfully adhering to the commandments of our God. We may slip and fall, in our own, and the estimation of others; but the Lord remaineth a King for ever, the same unchangeable merciful Being, who will not deal with us after our frailties; and if we are heartily sorry for our offences, will raise us up again to favour.

The taunts and sneers of an unbelieving world are often the means of unmasking the mere professor, and shewing the emptiness of all self-righteousness; but although they may for a time overpower or terrify the young and inexperienced Christian, they cannot shake the confidence of that heart which is right before God, or root out the love abiding there, or rob the weakest of their evidence. Worlds would not purchase this treasure, “the pearl of great price,” which the happy possessor

has received “without money;” but not for any thing less than the very self-righteousness which is the fruitless stock of the worldling. Let us then cast aside every weight and hinderance to our spiritual race; persevering steadily, and with all patience, in the way to Zion; where, if the Lord will, we may arrive *now*, to-night, at cock-crowing, or in the morning.

If we have not, all of us, reason to praise for ever the boundless mercy of the great Source of being for the blessing of godly parents; we surely owe a debt of gratitude to *him*, that we can never repay or be sufficiently thankful for, that it has pleased the Giver of every good and perfect gift, to cast our lot upon the planet, as far as we know, most highly favoured with the light of the everlasting gospel! Had we been born among the heathen, victims of pagan idolatries and superstition, we might have sunk in the blackness of despair; but glory be to God, it is not so. Oh, then, let us enjoy our privileges; let us shew by our lives and

conduct, that we have formed some estimate of the value of such rich and undeserved mercies ; and never think lightly of, or forget for one moment, our obligations. We are not our own, but a portion of that inheritance for which the great Redeemer paid the price of his precious blood : can we then despise so great salvation, set at nought his counsel, and refuse to regard his frequent calls ?

Let us not be as the scorers that delight in scorning, or fools that hate knowledge ; but like the wise queen of the south, let us go and see, for a greater than Solomon reigns with us. Remember that the goings forth of providence are always in the paths of diligence, which, the Apostle Peter says, will keep us from falling.⁸ We must not only be heaping up riches, but ever stretching out our hands to do good. Study, therefore, to keep the conscience clean and pure, by holy and tender walking, in the daily exercise of faith ; for it is the blood of Christ only that can purge the

⁸ 2 Peter i. 10.

conscience from dead works to serve the living God.⁹

“Count, then, upon the difficulties that beset the heavenly path, and gird yourself to meet them. You will never pluck the Rose of Sharon, if you are afraid of being pricked with the thorns which surround it; you will never reach the crown, if you flinch from the cross in the way to it. Oh! think of the honour of bearing this cross: it is conformity to the Son of God. Let the mind be deeply imbued with the remembrance of his daily cross of suffering and reproach, and we shall gladly ‘go forth without the camp, bearing his reproach,’ and even ‘rejoicing, if we are counted worthy to suffer shame’¹ with him and for him. Indeed what love do we profess to bear him, if we will not take up a cross for him? How can we be followers, without his cross?² How can we be Christians, if we are not confessors of Christ before a world that despises his gospel?” May we have grace

⁹ Hebrews ix. 14. ¹ Heb. xiii. 13. Acts v. 41.

² Matthew xvi. 21.

distinctly to avow, on all occasions, our conviction of the unutterable importance of a right knowledge of those blessed truths, which so nearly concern the glory of Jehovah, and the salvation of our brethren; that there is "none other name," but that of Jesus, whereby sinners must be saved; that "other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ;" that "we are complete in Him," who is "made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." Let us remember that there is no "pure love" to be found of mortal birth; that we must not seek "here below," for the enjoyment of that state of blessedness which is reserved for them that inherit the promises, and will be their portion for ever, in the building of God, which is eternal in the heavens. The prophecy which the mother of king Lemuel taught him, especially that contained in the latter verses of the chapter which we quote, from the tenth to the thirty-first verses inclusive, of the praises and properties

of a good wife, may afford profitable food ; they cannot be too highly prized by every mother in Britain, for if carried out into all their various and important bearings, on the economy of domestic duties at the present time, they will be found to be quite as applicable, for the purposes of “ doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works,”³ now, as they were at the time they were written ; and will tend to assist us in modelling ourselves after the pattern given by an excellent mother in Israel.

“ Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price *is* far above rubies. Favour *is* deceitful, and beauty *is* vain; *but* a woman *that* feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.”⁴

We need not wander far from home, or seek in the depths of the earth, or sea, for pearls, for Job tells us the price of wisdom *is* above

³ 2 Timothy iii. 16, 17.

⁴ Proverbs xxxi. 10—31.

rubies. Behold, the fear of the Lord, that *is* wisdom; yea, he prepared it in the hearts of his people, to direct their steps: who are we then that darken counsel by words without knowledge? Where were we when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? Alas! what is man, that thou art mindful of him? When we consider thy heavens, and thy glory above the heavens, behold, *we* are vile; let us repent in dust and ashes; pay our vows; take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger; and who can tell *if* God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?

Amidst all the darkness of superstition, blindness of heart, and ignorance, that *now pervade* the face of Britain, there are still, here and there, bright spots, which appear to be expanding more and more every day; nor are there wanting those, who, like the astronomers watching the spots which are visible on

the sun's disk, are careful to mark their development day by day, trusting that *He* who ordereth all things well, will cause *His* light to shine more and more unto that perfect day, when His glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, shall be presented to Him holy and without blemish, "as a bride adorned for her husband," who should be constrained to say, "Thou *art* all fair, my love; *there is* no spot in thee."

The early violet blooms unnoticed; its fragrance, breathed in every passing air, escapes, and soon it dies away! no trace is left, for all it was sweet, it lived and died unseen. Not so the Prince's daughter! she cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved: his eye is over her, the very secrets of her heart are known to *him*, who will cleanse and purify her thoroughly: no good thing will he withhold. The *thoughts* of her secret chamber are written in the Lamb's book of life, and there, could she see herself "all glorious within," as a part of that mystical body, of

which Christ, the first-born from the dead, is head; she would greatly rejoice and be joyful in her God; she would feel constrained in his love, to exclaim, Behold, I was miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, but "he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels."

"Blessed, thrice blessed, are those whom the Holy Spirit enables to see in Jesus, as it were personified, the love of God, reconciling man to himself. When, with passions subdued, and affections spiritualized, influenced with love for God and Christ, and filled with charity to man, they find all joy and peace in believing. They feel themselves liberated from the chains of sin and death, and see the portals of heaven unbarred for their admission, by the power of *him* who first rose from the dead, and brought life and immortality into the world. They rejoice in hope, but with

humility, trusting solely in Christ, who, they know, will not suffer one of those to be lost whom God has given him. In this confidence, with all patience and gratitude, they prepare to attend the bridal feast of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and assume their wedding garments, washed white with his blood. Believing, yet humble; animated, but not presumptuous; hoping, yet fearing; they lift up their eyes and their hands to God and their Saviour, and joining the chorus of the angelic host, exclaim, with pious rapture, ‘Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. Amen.’ ”⁵

Yes, my dear friends, here is a prospect indeed! The grace of God, by teaching us to live soberly, rightcously, and godly in this present world, bringeth salvation;—*teacheth us*, that is, not barely shews the importance and loveliness of good works, and urgeth their observance, but “the love of Christ constraineth us” to the performance of them. We,

⁵ Lord Teignmouth’s Life, page 267.

indeed, objects of inestimable love, must bring forth fruits which flow from the *heart* as well as the head. We are commanded to love one another;⁶ to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, as strongly as we are to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. What shall we say, then? that all you, the beloved of your risen Lord, shall refrain exercising his spirit? God forbid! Let not the painting of a Musgrave,⁷ or any other character as ridiculous, deter you from pressing forward towards the mark, for the prize of your high calling. It may safely be asserted, that England owes much of her prosperity to your endeavours to promote Christianity in the darkest places, and under the most discouraging circumstances [for delicate females] of every description. You have done much good to the cause of Christ, both at home and abroad; but rather than discourage you, I would ask, may you not do much more?

Meditate then, I beseech you, on the good advice of the pious mother in Israel to her

⁶ 1 John iii. 41.

⁷ See Appendix B.

son, the prince Lemuel. Think only of the example, as pious and virtuous women, which your unblemished character affords to a world buried in sin and wickedness.

As wives and mothers.—No jealousy ; perfect trust in all domestic concerns ; no reserve of any kind ; the entire confidence of your husbands. Behold him, your head, deriving honour for your sake ; his love excited, by your affectionate desire to please him in every thing ; to promote the good of the family ; maintaining as perfectly uniform a temper to please and disposition to serve, as may be consistent with your various calls of provision, of labour, of duties in general. The counsels of pious mothers are precious to their children. Neither must the rod be spared to the ruin of the child, lest they forget the law, pervert judgment, and grow up tyrants. Be faithful, be diligent, and look well to the state of your households.

As unmarried.—Who has not felt the flatteries of youth ? Alas ! all the professions of

love, of praises to your beauty, your accomplishments, wit, gaiety, wealth, or rank, all, all are deceitful; mere fading vanities, which add nothing to real happiness, exposing young women to temptation and snares on every side, leaving only the remnants of pride and folly, without any foundation for durable affection.

Extravagant women waste their substance, derange their affairs, are a burden to themselves, and a curse to all around them. While the virtuous woman, who fears God, and does her duty, establishes her reputation on a basis that the world cannot shake. She has a looking-glass to go to, to dress herself by, which will be found to her honour and glory, in that day, when the Lord of hosts shall make up his jewels.

If we spiritualize this beautiful portion of scripture, and see in it a symbol of that blessed view of Christ's kingdom, given by St. John⁸ in his description of the new Jerusalem, that holy city which is prepared as a bride for her husband; in what degree of estimation ought

⁸ Revelation xxi. 3.

we to hold the virtuous woman, here chosen as the fittest emblem to represent *his* church?

Lemuel, by interpretation, *God with us*, is sitting in the gates, among the elders, and had in honour. *Gate* often signified power or dominion: *vide* Gen. xxii. 17, Matt. xvi. 18, or vii. 13, where *true conversion*, holiness of heart and life in the believer, is figured. This passage may admit of a mystical sense, Christ's entrance into the hearts of his people through the gates or everlasting doors, Ps. xxiv. 7, 9, which lift up their heads to receive the glorious Jehovah; the temple being a type of Christ and his church.

Reviewing what has been written, we see that "formerly there were widows in the Christian church, who, because of their poverty, were placed on the list of persons to be provided for at the expense of the church. There were others who had certain employments in the church; as to visit sick women, to assist women at baptism, and to do several things which decency would not permit the

other sex. Paul did not allow any woman to be chosen into this number, unless she were threescore years old, at least. Such must have been married but once; must have produced sufficient testimony of their good works; must have given good education to their children; must have exercised hospitality, washed the feet of the saints, and bestowed succour on the miserable and afflicted. He forbids that young widows should be admitted amongst these, or, at least, among such as were on the church list for maintenance."

Here we have the highest authority in the church, for continuing in all things to do what we can towards the education and maintenance of our poorer neighbours. The exact detail of the employments of these widows is not told us, yet we may be sure, from what we do know, that they were set apart and wholly engaged in labours of love; being widows indeed, desolate, trusting in God, and continuing in supplications and prayers day and night. The Mosaic laws provided amply for the sup-

port of widowhood—a kind of shame and reproach in Israel; though we have an instance in Judith, where from affection to her first husband she declined a second marriage and was commended.

Eve, or Chava in Hebrew, is derived from Chajim, life; because she was to be “the mother of all living.” The first woman having been insidiously seduced by the envious evil one to eat of the forbidden fruit, afterwards seduced Adam to a like transgression, and both became degraded. Shall not *woman*, then, contribute her portion to restore to a benighted world “examples of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity?” Were the gospel but more generally known, and lived up to; our people in this happy country, in the several towns and villages, better acquainted with its divine truths; and instead of being in the habit of using those blasphemous, profane, and filthy songs, and other trash of modern publications, which have issued from the press in such

numbers of late, to the great injury of poor sinners, the cause of religion, and morals of our people ;—if instead of these, were the saving truths of our holy faith but once diffused among them, what a blessed exchange, under divine grace, might not be expected to follow !

Every one, however low and humble, hath a little circle of acquaintance, where their influence, or example, or advice, or intreaty, will operate ; here let them exert themselves with this single view,—to point out to poor sinners the way of salvation, in and through the blood and righteousness of Christ ; remembering that no charity is so pure as that directed to the soul of a fellow-creature, an immortal soul ; and moreover, “ that they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.”

We dare not shut up the bowels of compassion from the afflicted ; it is the common duty of all mankind, men, women, and children, to do their best to alleviate suffering. Time is

short, the wall of partition must soon be taken down, death and judgment await all: think of appearing before the bar of justice, without an interest in that Advocate and Saviour, who offers pardon to all, and will be the Judge of all, having lightly esteemed the Rock of your salvation. Oh, think deeply of this; there is but *one way*; for God, out of Christ, is a consuming fire. Labour, then, for his honour and glory, that you may be received in that day, through grace, as one of "his sheep." Depend upon it, if you are sealed, you will often hear *his* voice⁹ in this wilderness, and will be enabled to follow him whithersoever he may lead you. If God be for us, who can be against us? Let all strive to obtain the promised crown of glory; and may God of his infinite mercy grant that this may be the happy portion of all who read these pages, for ever and ever.

"Let us now a little inquire, what may be the causes of the gross neglect of this duty; that the hinderances being discovered, may

⁹ 1 Kings xix. 12.

the more easily be overcome. One hinderance is men's own sin and guilt. 'They have not themselves been enraptured with heavenly delights; how then should they draw others so earnestly to seek them? They have not felt their own lost condition, nor their need of Christ, nor the renewing work of the Spirit; how then can they discover these to others? They are guilty of the sins they should reprove, and this makes them ashamed to reprove. Another is, a secret infidelity prevailing in men's hearts. Did we verily believe, that all the unregenerate and unholy shall be eternally tormented, how could we hold our tongues, or avoid bursting into tears, when we look them in the face? Especially when they are our near and dear friends? Thus doth secret unbelief consume the vigour of each grace and duty. O Christians, if you did verily believe that your ungodly neighbours, wife, husband, or child, should certainly lie for ever in hell, except they be thoroughly changed before death shall snatch them away,

would not this make you address them day and night till they were persuaded? Were it not for this cursed unbelief, our own and our neighbours' souls would gain more by us than they do. These attempts are also much hindered by our want of charity and compassion for men's souls. We look on miserable souls, and pass by, as the priest and Levite by the wounded man. What though the sinner, wounded by sin, and captivated by Satan, do not desire thy help himself; yet his misery cries aloud. If God had not heard the cry of our miseries, before he heard the cry of our prayers, and been moved by his own pity, before he was moved by our importunity, we might long have continued the slaves of Satan. You will pray to God for them, to open their eyes, and turn their hearts; and why not endeavour their conversion, if you desire it? And if you do not desire it, why do you ask it? Why do you not pray them to consider and return, as well as pray God to convert and turn them? If you should see your neighbour

fallen into a pit, and should pray God to help him out, but neither put forth your hand to help him, nor once direct him to help himself, would not any man censure you for cruelty and hypocrisy? It is as true of the soul as the body. ‘If any man seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?’ Or what love hath he to his brother’s soul? We are also hindered by a base man-pleasing disposition. We are so desirous to keep in credit and favour with men, that it makes us most unconscionably neglect our known duty. He is a foolish and unfaithful physician, that will let a sick man die for fear of troubling him. If our friends are distracted, we please them in nothing that tends to their hurt. And yet when they are besides themselves in point of salvation, and in their madness posting on to damnation, we will not stop them, for fear of displeasing them. How can we be Christians, that love the praise of men more than the praise of God? ‘For if we seek

to please men, we shall not be the servants of Christ.' It is common to be hindered by sinful bashfulness. When we should shame men out of their sins, we are ourselves ashamed of our duties. May not these sinners condemn us, when they blush not to swear, be drunk, or neglect the worship of God; and we blush to tell them of it, and persuade them from it? Bashfulness is unseemly in cases of necessity. It is not a work to be ashamed of, to obey God in persuading men from their sins to Christ. Reader, hath not thy conscience told thee of thy duty many a time, and put thee on to speak to poor sinners; and yet thou hast been ashamed to open thy mouth, and so let them alone to sink or swim? Oh! read and tremble, 'Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels.'¹ An idle and impatient spirit hindereth us. It is an ungrateful work, and sometimes makes men our ene-

¹ Mark viii. 38.

mies. Besides, it seldom succeeds at the first, except it be followed on. You must be long teaching the ignorant, and persuading the obstinate. We consider not what patience God used towards us, when we were in our sins. Woe to us, if God had been as impatient with us, as we are with others. Another hinderance is self-seeking. ‘For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ’s’² and their brethren’s. With many, pride is a great impediment. If it were to speak with a great man, and it would not displease him, they would do it. But to go among the poor, and take pains with them in their cottages, where is the person that will do it? Many will rejoice in being instrumental to convert a gentleman; and they have good reason; but overlook the multitude, as if the souls of all were not alike to God. Alas, these men little consider how low Christ stooped to us! Few rich, and noble, and wise are called. It is the poor that receive the glad tidings of the gospel. And with some, their ignorance of the duty hin-

² Phil. ii. 21.

dereth them from performing it. Either they know it not to be a duty, or at least not to be their duty. If this be thy case, reader, I am in hope thou art now acquainted with thy duty, and wilt set upon it.

“Do not object to this duty, that you are unable to manage an exhortation; but either set those on the work who are more able, or faithfully and humbly use the small ability you have, and tell them, as a weak man may do, what God says in his word.—Decline not the duty, because it is your superior who needs advice and exhortation. Order must be dispensed with in cases of necessity. Though it be a husband, a parent, a minister, you must teach him in such a case. If parents were in want, children must relieve them. If a husband be sick, the wife must fill up his place in family affairs. If the rich are reduced to beggary, they must receive charity. If the physician be sick, somebody must look to him. So the meanest servant must admonish his master, and the child his parent, and the

wife her husband, and the people their minister; so that it be done when there is real need, and with all possible humility, modesty, and meekness. Do not say, 'this will make us all preachers;' for every Christian is a teacher, and hath a charge of his neighbour's soul. Every man is a physician, when a regular physician cannot be had, and when the hurt is so small that any man may relieve it; and in the same cases every man must be a teacher. Do not despair of success. Cannot God give it? And must it not be by means? Do not plead, it will only be casting pearls before swine. When you are in danger to be torn in pieces, Christ would have you forbear; but what is that to you that are in no such danger? As long as they will hear, you have encouragement to speak, and may not cast them off as contemptible swine."³

As an additional reason for going to look after the state of the poor, it might be urged, that the alms-chest, which by the canons ecclesiastical, was ordered to be kept up, at

³ Baxter's Saints' Rest.

the expense of the parish, in every church, is now almost forgotten ; and wherever it is still to be seen, remains as a matter of speculation to some, or of curiosity to others ; few are the contributions to the box, which formerly was the depository of funds adequate to the relief of the poor of the parish ; every one giving according as the Lord had prospered him during the week.

Go on, then, dear Christian friends, visit all, comfort all, and *relieve*, to the utmost of your power, the souls, as well as the temporal wants of the needy. You need no pious counsellor, such as Elijah was to Elisha, to take you aside, and clothe you with his mantle. But take with you a heart overflowing with love for the souls of your fellow-creatures, an earnest desire to do your duty, and a single eye to the glory of God ; attempting nothing in your own strength, but relying on the alone merit of the Redeemer, commit yourselves, body, soul, and spirit, and your *every care*, in simple faith, to *him*.

“Go forward, then, in the strength that has accompanied you hitherto. Dwell much in thought on the wretchedness of those who are aliens from Christ, and from the hope of salvation; and reflect on the mercy that has made you to differ from the myriads who by nature are nothing worse than you. Never fancy that you love the Saviour, unless you heartily endeavour to give scope and effect to his gospel. Be active, yet circumspect; fervent, yet blameless; praying always in the Holy Ghost; looking up to God, under every emergency, to strengthen your hands; and giving him all the glory. It may then be safely predicted that you will be steadfast and unmoveable in your labour of love, and that God will direct it by his providence, and crown it with his blessing.”⁴

Remember that money is “a talent,” for the right use of which you will, in the great and awful day of judgment, have to account. Woe

⁴ Extract from Sermon preached the day before the second annual meeting of the Church Pastoral-Aid Society.

be to those wicked servants who have buried it in avarice or extravagance, in vain amusements, decorations, or any such vanities. Has He, who has said, "Occupy till I come," no claim upon your substance? Yes, all we have is his. Rest assured the day will come, when the whole of our past lives, so far as they have not been spent in his service, will appear to every one of us hateful, odious, and desperately wicked.

Let us then arise at once, for "Behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation;"⁵ and seek in earnest prayer that teaching which alone shakes the dominion of sin, and enables us to bring forth acceptable fruit. "To whom much is given, of him shall much be required," is a portion of scripture demanding deep and heartfelt conviction from every one, that they have examined themselves, with reference to their means, and that they are not saying under any pretence, "My Lord delayeth his coming." Much more might be said, by way of direction to labourers; this

⁵ 2 Corinthians vi. 2.

is a task which the author feels himself quite unable to undertake profitably; and it must be left to some of the "salt of the earth," whose personal holiness is so far advanced, as to qualify them to point out to all, the true character of experimental and practical piety.

Personal holiness is essentially requisite. David prayed that "our daughters *may be* as corner-stones, polished *after* the similitude of a palace;"⁶ which emblem of holiness Peter also made use of, when he shewed the foundation on which the "lively stones" were to be built up, into "a spiritual house, an holy priesthood,"⁷ to shew forth the praises of *Him*, who called them "out of darkness into his marvellous light." "True faith is lively, operative, and fruitful. True faith works by love, that sacred spring which sets all the wheels of obedience in motion. True faith purifies the heart, by uniting the soul to Jesus, and drawing from him, through the Spirit, continual supplies of grace and strength, to mortify sin, and walk in the ways of holy obedience. True

⁶ Psalm cxliv. 12.

⁷ 1 Peter ii. 5, 9.

faith overcomes the world, by raising the believer above its vanities and follies, by enabling him to renounce its pomps and honours, and to live as a pilgrim and stranger upon earth. True faith realizes the invisible glories of heaven, and thus becomes the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. But how does the *world's faith* operate? It leads men to the house of God on the Sabbath, and suffers them to attend theatres and gaities of every description through the week; to attend the Lord's table, on some great festival of the church, and then lull their consciences to sleep, as though they had done 'some great thing' towards liquidating their debt.—It has nothing *saving* in it. This profession of faith is consistent with worldly ambition, pride, lust, avarice, hatred of God, and enmity to the gospel." "Many nominal professors of Christianity are of a sweet, amiable disposition; temperate in their enjoyments, and benevolent to their poor neighbours. They are ready to promote objects of general

usefulness, and pride themselves upon their integrity of principle and strict propriety of action. But alas ! are their affections weaned from the world ? Does Jesus daily become more precious ? Have they experienced real sorrow for sin, and do they hate it for its exceeding sinfulness ? They know little, and feel less, of all this, or of their need of a crucified Saviour to save them from the curse. They come to the gospel as ‘ they who are whole ;’ their language is, ‘ what lack I yet ?’ They deem all renunciation of the world, all warm affections to the Saviour, all experimental religion, as *carrying matters too far*.”⁸ They forget the words of truth, “ Ye cannot serve God and mammon,” and go on deceiving themselves with the hope of getting to heaven at last, although they have never taken *the turning* that leads to it. All this shews the necessity of “ *true holiness*,” and also the importance of proving ourselves, by trying to walk through all the breadths and lengths of the love of Christ, and descending into the

⁸ Christian Retirement.

depths of humiliation, that we may rise to the heights which pass knowledge, for they are, as St. Paul says of the deep things of God, "not lawful [or *possible*] for a man to utter."⁹ What are all worldly joys, or honours, or privileges, to the heights accessible to ardent, earnest, Christians? They are less than nothing—mere vanity! Lord, "write upon my heart thy name, thy new, best name of love." If we have not felt the power of "the fountain," opened by our Advocate's propitiatory sacrifice of himself upon the cross, to the relief of our own souls, how can we explain "the way" to others? Let us then "examine ourselves,"¹ and keep our bodies in subjection,² lest we should be *castaways*, and the Lord reject us. We must look inwardly, and ask ourselves, as in the presence of God, "In what respects do I need quickening grace? What are my views of sin, and especially of the sin of my own heart? Are they slight and superficial? Do they fail in producing humility, abasement,

⁹ 2 Corinthians xii. 4.

¹ 2 Corinthians xiii. 5.

² 1 Corinthians ix. 27.

tenderness of conscience, circumspection of conduct? If so, these are symptoms of spiritual deadness. ‘Quicken me, O my God!’ Does my apprehension of a Saviour’s love serve to embitter sin to me? To crucify sin in me? To warm and enliven my heart with love to him, and zeal in his service? If I am convicted of coldness to such a Saviour, and sluggishness in such a service, I need to pray, ‘O Lord, quicken me!’ And how do I find it with regard to prayer itself? Are not my prayers general—infrequent—wandering? Is not my service too often constrained?—a forced duty, rather than a privilege and delight?—‘O Lord, quicken me!’”³ This inquiry will lead us all to seek deeper and more spiritual communion with God, by engaging all the faculties, affections, and workings of the soul to a more earnest desire for his glory. “Search the scriptures;” learn *his* will and do it. Continue instant in prayer, in every thing giving thanks. “Stand in awe, and sin not; commune with your own heart

³ Bridges’s Exposition of Psalm cxix. 156.

upon your bed, and be still." "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God." Continue to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and neglect not any means of grace, that you may dwell in the house of the Lord all your days. By perseverance in well doing, you will die to the world, and live unto God; gain patience in trouble; fortitude in danger; gratitude for mercies; direction in difficulties; peace and joy in opposition; happiness in death; and a continually abiding, earnest desire for heaven and glory. "Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*."

Mr. Fletcher says in a letter to two female friends, October 1, 1759, "I charge you before the Lord Jesus Christ, who giveth life and more abundant life; I intreat you by all the actings of faith, the exertions of hope, the

flames of love, you ever felt, sink to greater depths of self-abasing repentance, and rise to greater heights of Christ-exalting joy. And let him who is able to do exceeding abundantly more than you can ask or think, carry on and fulfil in you the work of faith with power; with that power whereby he subdueth all things to himself. 'Be stedfast in hope,' immoveable in patience and love, always abounding in the *outward* and inward labour of love, and 'receive the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls.' "

Our end and only object in life is the glory of the Lord; "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which* is your reasonable service."⁴ "Be not conformed to this world," for there is a glorious "recompence of reward" in store for all, who by *faith* and *patience* maintain their confidence, and esteem the cross of Christ as better far than all the riches of the ungodly.⁵ Great will be the wonder and astonishment of

⁴ Romans xii. 1.

⁵ Hebrews x. 35, xi. 26.

many, who, called before the Lord of all, in the great day of judgment, unconscious of having borne a burden, or laboured for him, shall find themselves walking in white and worthy! Such must be the overwhelming sight of glory, "when every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father," that no one will be able to think himself worthy. "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me."⁶ What joy, what ecstacy, to hear these blessed words for *ourselves*, from *our* Father in heaven!

Now that I have arrived at the conclusion of the work, before I take my leave of your amiable circle, let me beg and intreat you to remember the exhortations contained in the

⁶ Matthew xxv. 34—36.

last chapter of the epistles general of Peter, considering your responsibilities, implied in every word of holy writ, as Christians: remembering that the freeness of divine grace is to all, men and women equally partakers of the operations of the Spirit. There is no word of exhortation in this book that does not in some way apply *to you*; directly or indirectly you must be labourers here, if you expect to reap hereafter! 'The streams of mercy flow through many channels, for the recovery of poor sinners and the healing of the nations. Take care, lest, in the weakness of faith, you impede the course of blessings, by looking to the instrument only, and not to the Lord as the only source of mercy. Be not mindful of the end, and forgetful of the means, for this would be to expect to reap before you had sown, and could only lead to disappointment; but be ye diligent in all the means of grace, with a heart teeming with gratitude to the Lord for them; and in due season, depend upon it, you shall reap, if you faint not. "Be-

were lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness."

Archbishop Usher, when in the society of his friends, and about to separate from them, had a favourite saying, "A word of Christ before we part," which he often used, before the party knelt in prayer: it may be permitted us to follow his example; and as we are not able to do any thing acceptable to God the Father, unless it be in and through the Lord Jesus Christ, our Advocate and Mediator, we would earnestly beseech all to be very watchful, to maintain a prayerful spirit, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, to enable us, by the help of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, to "strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die:" to this end, your *fervent prayers* are needed, that the merciful Father of spirits, the attractive of love, and ocean of delights, may draw up our drossy hearts unto himself, and keep them there till they are spiritualized and refined, to enable

us to offer unto the Lord spiritual sacrifices ; that he may pour out a blessing upon the labour of those whose privilege it is to work in his vineyard, that the cause of mercy be not hindered ; and that He whose ways are not our ways, whose strength is perfected in weakness, may lift up the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees, and further every effort made in the cause of poor sinners, to his own honour and glory, by “ turning many souls from darkness to light, and from the power of sin and Satan unto God.” Amen.

APPENDIX.

A.

As a specimen of the feeling spirit of the present times, and the confidence which British ladies have in their youthful sovereign, we quote the following

“MEMORIAL TO THE QUEEN.—We have authority to state, that the number of signatures to the address of the *ladies of England* to the Queen, on behalf of the negro apprentices, now exceeds 420,000. This is exclusive of the signatures to separate addresses on the same subject from several large towns, such as Manchester, Hereford, and others; and of course, does not include the signatures to the address of the *ladies of Scotland and Ireland*, where, we know, very large numbers have been obtained. If these were added, we believe the numbers would fall very little short, if any, of *one million*. This number would have been considerably exceeded had more time been given for signing; for the ladies, in a great majority of the towns, state that they could

have sent up three times the number they have sent, had that been the case. It is an interesting subject of reflection, that one million of the fairest, loveliest, and best of human beings, have thus attested, by their own hand-writing, how deeply they are interested in the sufferings of their sable sisters on the distant shores of the Antilles."—*Christian Advocate*.

Here is a sight, a noble sight;—one million ladies joined heart and soul in one common cause: *female effort in the Saviour's cause exemplified!* This savours of "visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction;"⁷ and there can be but one wish respecting it,—that their petition may be granted; that to their united effort, the feeling heart of England's Queen may be able to respond, unfettered by the clog of politics, [as we feel sure its natural bent would dictate,] in the full and complete restitution of the long lost rights of the poor negroes and their descendants; over whom the iron grasp of tyranny and oppression is daily exerting less power, and becoming subject to a watchful care that shall soon remove the evil altogether.

B.

Extract from a novel, "*Private Life*," by the author of "*Geraldine*," &c. &c. [We quote this with-

out knowing any thing of the *novel*, its object, moral, or the *name even* of its author; such trash, as books of this description usually are, is not suited to the taste of any who have learnt to enjoy "*the truth as it is in Jesus.*" We refrain from making any comment upon the very specious appearance and doubtful piety of such a character as Miss Musgrave,—we are persuaded that *the tendency of her example would be injurious*, and hold her up as a *scare-crow* to save the good seed, that all who see her may try to avoid her dictating, dogmatizing, and repugnant tenets, and sow to the Spirit in better ground. She has been used as a *scare-crow* by another party, who, it is much to be feared, are sowing to the flesh; to frighten young and inexperienced Christians from the path of duty. It was in this light that she first attracted our notice, and led us to make this extract, to warn the unguarded and unsuspecting of the danger of attaching too much weight to *anti-hectics*, coming from *such a source* and in *such a garb*.]

"Miss Musgrave entered on her projected career of usefulness without loss of time: she lectured the old, and tutored the young; scolded the idle; nor did she forget to clothe the naked and feed the hungry;—all this she performed with a disregard of forms and hours, wholly at variance with Mrs. Bentley's clock-work habits, and which kept that lady's

mind in a perpetual conflict and astonishment. Miss Musgrave seldom appeared at the breakfast table till the tea was weak and cold : at dinner, a plate might be set by for her, or if she dined at the fixed, legitimate dinner hour, she would disappear with the cloth, and recommence her erratic proceedings.

“ Mr. Mortimer watched her with a quiet, observant eye :—he discovered that, with the best intentions, her theological instructions were somewhat muddy and mystical ; his object, however, was not to quench, but to regulate the young lady’s zeal,—to prove that the pastoral staff was far too sacred a deposit to be trusted to inexperienced and unprepared hands : and one morning, on returning from some of her visits, she found the following letter on her dressing table :

“ ‘ My dear Miss Musgrave,—it is now two months since I had the pleasure of an introduction to you, and during that time I have been a silent, but not an uninterested observer of your opinions, pursuits, and habits. It is with much satisfaction that I have witnessed your active desire of doing good ; and I have still more satisfaction in expressing my conviction, that this activity springs, in a great degree, from true Christian principle ; that your love of religion is sincere and genuine, and that you are unfeignedly anxious to promote the best interests of your fellow-creatures.

“ ‘ I make no apology for these observations : called to watch for souls, as one who must give an account, at that awful tribunal where the pastor and his flock will one day stand, every individual of that flock becomes to me an object of deep and solemn interest. I have said that you are anxious to promote the best interests of your fellow-creatures ; but it is possible that the means you employ for effecting this object may be inadequate or unsuitable : unsoundness of opinion, or immaturity of judgment, may disqualify you for that spiritual superintendence which you seem desirous of sharing with me. I candidly acknowledge that I do not feel sufficient confidence in your discretion and judgment, to allow of such a participation ; nor, indeed, were you thoroughly qualified, should I deem it right to sanction a practice likely to lead to mischievous innovations. Young persons, with opinions decidedly erroneous, may be animated by a zeal like your own, and conceive it to be their duty to multiply proselytes in the neighbourhood in which they reside. Now, while I do ample justice to the purity and singleness of your intentions, I must be allowed to say, that, as the shepherd of this part of Christ’s fold, I am not a little interested in the spiritual food administered to my flock ; and therefore I make it my particular request, that any religious books which you are kind enough to supply

may first be placed in my hands; and that in conversing with your poor neighbours on religious subjects, you will confine yourself to those simple doctrines and truths, which are the pillars of our holy faith. I appeal, in this request, to your courtesy as a gentlewoman, and to the deference which I feel to be my due, as the appointed spiritual guide of this parish. As an auxiliary, as a young person acting under my auspices and influence, I shall be happy to claim your assistance, whenever that assistance may be beneficial. I intreat you not for one moment to imagine, that by thus attempting to direct and control your exertions, I have any wish to check your sympathy for the temporal and spiritual wants of those around you, or to cramp the energy of your benevolence;—no, let the full tide of kindling feeling flow on; let the bright morning of your days be dedicated to God. Far be from me the wish of abridging your usefulness: on the contrary, it is my earnest desire, that by intelligent and well-directed activity, you may become an example to your companions in age and station. You have chosen, incomparably, the better part; but let not your good be evil spoken of; you cannot be too devoted, you cannot be too useful; but we may all be too busy.

“ ‘The cultivation of personal religion, and of those habits of thought, reflection, and watchfulness, upon

which its growth so much depends, may be impeded by that restlessness and love of excitement, which, not unfrequently, take the form of religious zeal. Bear with me while I caution you on this subject, and while I point out what I consider to be some mistakes in your tone and manner in general society. It is one of the tests of our sincerity as Christians, that we are really anxious to discover and correct the defects of our own character; and as I give you full credit for this sincerity, I am disposed to think you will listen without resentment to the language of expostulation. In my character of pastor, therefore, I venture to say, that I consider you as deficient in practical humility and charity: you set up certain tests, by which you decide upon the Christian feeling and religious zeal of all your acquaintance; and the *shibboleth* of party has but too much influence in the decision. To support certain societies and institutions, is with you the test of Christian and clerical character, the touchstone by which their piety is to be tried, the thermometer by which the temperature of their zeal is to be determined. Now, why should you deny to others the privilege which you yourself claim, of directing your exertions in the channel which you conceive most useful? To stigmatize them as lukewarm, because they avail themselves of the same privilege of choice, is at once uncandid and

presumptuous. If, indeed, you discover coldness and indifference upon those most interesting subjects, the extension of Christianity and the diffusion of religious knowledge; if the contemplation of that day, when there shall be one fold and one shepherd, awaken no glow of feeling, excite no lively interest, and animate to no exertions, there is reason to fear that the lamp is not carefully trimmed, nor the light brightly burning; that the spirit of faith and love is not shed abroad in the heart. But even in such a case the language of harsh invective should never be employed. As a Christian and a clergyman, I should feel it my duty to remonstrate frankly and fearlessly, but in the spirit of that religion whose essence is love.

“ ‘ In general, the faith, hope, and zeal of a young person, especially of a young woman, are best discovered by a sedulous performance of duty; by the control and regulation of her feelings and temper; by a nice and conscientious improvement of time; by a cultivation of all the sympathies and charities that ameliorate and embellish life. To reprove and rebuke are not her province; it is rarely her duty to use the language of exhortation, more especially in general conversation; but if a moment occur in which a word in season may be spoken, in what spirit of gentleness and humility should that word be uttered! How entirely should the language of dictation and the tone

of dogmatism be avoided! Take care that you do not sacrifice the appropriate and indispensable graces of youth to a zeal without knowledge;⁶ that you do not, by turning your energy into an unfit channel, retard your progress in piety; take care that while you busy yourself about the duties of others, you do not forget your own. Analyse your motives carefully, judge your own conduct strictly; but avoid all harsh construction as to the motives of others, and judge with the utmost possible tenderness of their actions. As far as example can influence, let yours be not only blameless but winning. Early piety is beautiful as the violet of spring; let it discover itself, like that unobtrusive flower, by diffusive sweetness. Do not mistake me; do not believe, I intreat you, that I am advocating that compromising spirit, which is at once so contemptible and so fatal. Fear neither the frown nor the laugh of the world; let not the imputation of methodism or singularity for a moment deter you from devoting yourself to those pursuits and objects, which you feel to be of unspeakable value. Pursue the narrow way with an unwearied step; act firmly up to your convictions, but do not erect yourself into the champion of a party. As long as I have any influence as a pastor, I will use it to prevent my parishioners from raising that they term the standard of evangelism on one side, and that of orthodoxy on

⁶ See Appendix C.

the other: I will not permit them, without remonstrance, to waste the brief days of a brief life in vain disputation and wrangling controversy. When I reflect upon the points of difference by which these two parties are severed, and upon the love of truth, the piety and zeal by which many individuals of each party, who have come under my own observation, are distinguished, I cannot but contemplate them, "as children who have fallen out by the way, in pursuing the path that leads to their Father's house, but who will yet rejoice together in the light of his presence, and smile at the differences that divided them on their journey." Surely we should be far better employed in watching the evil tendencies of our own hearts, in measuring our conduct by the word of God, and the example of Christ, than by settling the comparative merits of certain persons and certain opinions, indulging an accusing spirit against those who differ from us in our estimate of those persons and opinions: surely to provoke each other to love and good works ought to be the only rivalry among Christians.

" ' Let me intreat you to think of these things: consider them well, my dear Miss Musgrave; and the piety which, in your case, is too apt to wear a repulsive aspect, will be seen in all its appropriate loveliness. May I be permitted to add, that I think a steady course of religious and devotional reading

might be useful to you ; it would give a more healthful and vigorous tone to your feelings and sentiments. There is at present something *hectic* in the complexion of your piety. From the tenor of your conversation, I fear that even in reading the scriptures, your disposition is not sufficiently humble and teachable ; you appear to me to read them rather to strengthen your preconceived opinions, than that your will may be subdued and controlled, and your conduct regulated by their clear and sublime lessons. You trust chiefly to your own interpretations and comments, disdaining the use of books ; and thus in my opinion neglect the use of those means of spiritual and intellectual improvement, which, in this land of light and religious knowledge, God himself has bestowed upon you. You are content with the somewhat muddy waters of your own cistern, when innumerable springs, from which you would derive strength and nourishment, arise around you. Your reading is in a great degree desultory, and chiefly confined to a few tracts, and some of the popular religious fictions of the day. Now many of these fictions, excellent as they are, do not furnish what I consider wholesome food for your peculiar constitution of mind ; but very unintentionally foster the mistakes into which you are betrayed. They generally relate the history of some child or young person, through whose

agency the conversion of the whole family is effected. Now human nature is so imitative, that the tone of such characters is more easily caught, than the principles by which they are influenced. Children learn to parrotize on the subject; and young people imagine that the superstructure of their religion is complete, when even the first stone of the building is not firmly laid. To echo the language of piety, to talk of principles and feelings, is extremely easy: it is one thing to walk through an armoury, and descant upon the use of the sword, and shield, and helmet,—and another to buckle them on, and grapple with our foes in the battle-field. I have another objection to the prevailing strain of these fictions: the young person who converts all within her sphere generally dies in the full beauty of early bloom, the victim of consumption, and shows forth the value of Christian principles in the most arduous of all conflicts. This is well: but would it not be better occasionally to vary the circumstances, and to show forth those principles, not only in the conflict of death, but in the conflict of life; to display their purifying, animating, sustaining effect, amidst the thousand cares, temptations, and perplexities of active life; to bring them in contact with society, and prove that the fine gold, even there, will not become dim: to exhibit there principles as beautifying the maternal and conjugal

character, and rendering human nature not only pious, but lovely, engaging, and useful ?

“ ‘ In portraying characters as examples, I think it would be more beneficial to display Christianity in its regulating, practical effects; restraining the temper, subduing the passions, and controlling, by its hallowed influence, the desires, wishes, and hopes, of the heart; teaching us, in short, not only to think rightly and suffer meekly, but how to live, as well as how to die.

“ ‘ I have perhaps trespassed on your patience, my dear young lady, by this long letter; but you will do justice to the motive by which I am influenced; and you will believe that I am actuated only by a deep concern for your spiritual welfare. With a full sense of my duty and my privilege to promote those interests by every means in my power, each individual of my flock has a claim upon my time, a claim upon my sympathy, and an interest in my prayers; and it is the hope and wish nearest to my heart, that they may be “my crown and my joy,” in that great day when the Lord shall “make up his jewels.”

“ ‘ With affectionate and holy earnestness do I commend you to the guidance of that Spirit, who can alone impart a right judgment in all things; who can alone establish, strengthen, settle you; and let me intreat that in your prayers before the throne

of grace, you will not forget frequent supplications for

“ ‘ Your faithful friend and pastor,

“ ‘ W. MORTIMER.’ ”

The extract concludes with,—“ Miss Musgrave had sufficient good sense and good breeding to receive the letter with a good grace. She could not, indeed, at once divest herself of the habit of dictating and dogmatizing; such a reformation must be a work of time; but she acceded to Mr. M.’s wish respecting the religious books she distributed; and she submitted, though reluctantly, to follow where she had hitherto loved to lead. Mr. M. was careful to claim her active services, whenever they were at all compatible with his own plans; and he, in many cases, successfully combatted the prejudices which her manners excited; and by his candid appreciation of what was really valuable in her character, softened the repugnance which she not unfrequently inspired.”

Notwithstanding the mass of really good advice which this extract contains, we fear that Mr. Mortimer was, at the time he wrote it, in the same predicament as a minister of whom Dr. Krummacher speaks, in part XIV. of *Elijah the Tishbite*, where he says, “ ‘ There was, some years ago, not far from this place, [the vale of Barmen] a very gifted preacher, who for

several years preached with great earnestness and success the doctrine of the cross, but who on that very account was violently opposed." One of his stoutest opponents becoming convinced of sin under a sermon, came to him to ask if he believed, or could prove the truth of what had been asserted in the discourse, ("a new creature in Christ, or eternal condemnation") in which "*he spoke with power,*" so it is said, "and not as a mere learned reasoner." "The preacher replied, that it was the word of God, and consequently infallible truth. 'What then is to become of *us*?' replied the visitor. His last word, *us*, startled the preacher; but he rallied his thoughts, and began to explain the plan of salvation to the inquirer, and to exhort him to repent and believe. The latter repeated with increased emotion and anxious exclamation, 'What are *we* to do?' Terrified, the preacher staggers back. 'We' thinks he, 'what means this *we*?' " Endeavouring to stifle his inward confusion, he resumed his advice—but the other, bursting into tears, smote his hands together in despair, and exclaimed in an accent which might have moved a heart of stone, "Sir, if it be truth, *we* are lost and undone!" Both now fell on their knees, and prayed for mercy; shortly afterwards, the visitor took his leave, and the preacher shut himself up in his closet,—unable to appear till the third Sunday after, when worn, and

pale, but his eyes beaming with joy, he declared to his astonished people, that he had now, for the first time, passed through the strait gate !

“ You will ask what had occurred to him in his chamber, during the interval which had elapsed. A storm passed over him but the Lord was not in the storm ; an earthquake—but the Lord was not in the earthquake ; a fire—but the Lord was not in the fire.⁹ Then came a small still voice, on which the man enveloped his face in his hands, and from that time knew what was the gospel, and what was grace.”

“ Jesus does not draw near with his small still voice, without first overthrowing every high thing that exalts itself against him, and subverting the power of the old man within us*Seeking* is not sufficient here, it must be striven for. Do *you* imagine you have heard the gentle voice of grace ? For be assured, if it be so, all the imaginations of the old man will be cast down, and the deceitful ground of self-righteousness and self-sufficiency removed ; for the new creation within us rises upon the ruins of the old and corrupt nature. By bringing to nought things that are, God makes of us what we by nature are not.”

C.

.....[“ A zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.” Rom. x. 2.] Lecture III. of Four Lectures, by the Rev. W. Scoresby, *A Plea for the Unity of the Church*, on Prevalent Enthusiasm, contains the following remarks.—“ We bear them record that, for the most part, at least, they have an honest and conscientious zeal for God ; but, as we shall endeavour to prove, ‘ Not according to knowledge.’ ”

This alludes to the gift of tongues; and Mr. S. proceeds, with the clearest demonstration to any undeluded person, to prove that neither this gift, nor miracles, have in the present day appeared. “ The *miraculous* amount is, the raising up of a few nervous and debilitated females, from a prostrate position to a capability of walking. But as to this, where was the manifestation of supernatural power ? Did the enervated frame forthwith receive the vigour of health ? Did the previously prostrate rise up, with the renovated energy of the object of Peter’s compassion, ‘ walking and leaping,’ as well as praising God ? Did the emaciated frame forthwith fill up, with all the repletion of perfect strength ? Confessedly not.” He shews that all the *cured* were still “ tottering creatures ”—“ pitiable resemblances ” of the mighty works of old. In another part :—

“Now as to the asserted tongues of the present times, where is the evidence of the Spirit? Where is the amazed foreigner who recognizes, in language unknown to the speaker, the tongue in which he was born? Where is the consistent interpreter? [And lastly, *not least*,—ED.] where is *the new revelation* for the edification of the church?”

..... He decides, satisfactorily enough to us, that “false prophets are gone out into the world;” and while the tender-minded Christian, who is apprehensive of resisting the Spirit, is comforted, and guarded from error by the word of God, the importance of sober-mindedness is urged upon all Christians, in a very forcible and impressive exhortation; and he concludes this excellent lecture with a word of advice, *to those* who ascribe *all peculiar and spiritual feelings to enthusiasm*, on the importance of a right zeal; warning *them*, not to cry peace, when there is no peace, lest they fall short of “the truth as it is in Jesus,” and come short of eternal life. [We strongly recommend this little work of Mr. Scoresby’s to the notice of all who may read this note, and their friends.]

One word more on *miracles*.—Those who perform them, or try to do so, always say that they fail by reason of the weak faith of the afflicted. How then, we would ask, did the faith of the *dead* who were raised appear? Or did not the Saviour heal the sick

of the palsy, who was let down through the roof into the room where *He* was, for the faith's sake of them that bore him ?¹

D.

[The talented M. S. exhibits clearly the true nature of, and scriptural authority for, the highest description of female effort. We crave pardon for withholding any portion of a letter, which is calculated to benefit all classes of readers; we were scarcely enabled to present, from want of space only, (*having received it while the work was in the press*) this mutilated fragment of so valuable a document.]

“In order to begin our testimony from the more distant period of the Old Testament dispensation: in the first place it is necessary that we have clear ideas as to the word *prophecy*, so frequently used in the scriptures, and so often applied to the gift bestowed upon females. It signifies in the *highest* sense, a power to predict things future, and was possessed by Deborah and others: in its lower sense it signifies, to edify, teach, or instruct; and in this sense is evidently used both in reference to the labours of men and women. This explanation of the word *prophecy*, we possess in 1 Cor. xiv. 3, 4. ‘But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to *edification*, and *exhortation*,

¹ Mark ii. 4, 5.

and *comfort*,' &c. the whole passage decidedly proving that, as it respected the building up of the church in all sound *doctrine*, &c. this kind of *prophesying* was to be considered of unspeakable value; and that the word is not to be restricted to the peculiar gift of *predicting* the dispensations of God. We now advance to the view of those females mentioned in the scriptures, by whom the gift of prophecy was possessed, whether in its highest or more subordinate signification. MIRIAM, the sister of Moses, was a *prophetess*. She led the song of thanksgiving after the deliverance from the Red Sea, and in the great congregation conducted the tribute of praise, Exod. xv. 20, 21. If it be objected that she exercised her talent as the leader of the *women* who followed her with timbrels, &c. we may turn to Micah vi. 4, and shall find her mentioned with Moses and Aaron as a leader of Israel in general, being no doubt distinguished by her prophetic powers as a public blessing to the tribes. Of DEBORAH it is said, she *judged Israel*, being also a prophetess, Judges iv. 4, 5. She evidently exercised a talent of a very extensive degree, and ruled Israel by her counsels both in things temporal and spiritual; for it is said, 'The children of Israel came up to her for judgment;' and the whole of her history decides that she was a *public teacher*, and one to whom men and women willingly gave the

tribute of deference and trust. HULDAH was a prophetess, and accepted by all Israel as a teacher of most excellent worth; nor did the highest dignitaries of the realm refuse to admit her authority, or to listen to her counsels. The king, the princes, the chief rulers, and even the high-priest went *up to her* for counsel, as to one established in authority, and sent to them by the Lord, 2 Kings xxii. 12—20. These are striking examples of the *lawfulness* of a woman's teaching, sufficient to silence for ever the plea that it is contrary to a divine command: for God is of one mind, and if it was lawful in the Old Testament dispensation, it must continue to be so in the New, for the scriptures are not contradictory in their voice. We are not, however, left to deduce this result from mere reasoning, for the scriptures determine the point for themselves; and we find that so far from the gospel having abrogated this liberty, it recognizes it in more abundant power, and renders the example of the Old Testament times but as pledges and first-fruits of the more liberal impartation of these gifts to females in the dispensation of the gospel.

“Of this intution the Holy Ghost gave full intimation by the prophet Joel, ii. 28, 29: read this passage with attention. It contains a promise of the outpouring of the Spirit, in consequence of which ‘*daughters* shall prophesy.’ And lest there should

be any doubt remaining, it is added, ‘Upon your *handmaids*, in those days, I will pour out my Spirit.’ Let the Apostle Peter be the interpreter of this promise, and observe the *times* in which he declares it to be fulfilled, Acts ii. 16—18. If we examine the historical part contained in the first and second chapters of the Acts, it will appear that the *flock* of believers were all together at this time. See the connection from chap. i. 14—26. to chap. ii. 1—18; and it will be evident, the Spirit did then descend on the *whole* assembly, *daughters* and *handmaidens*, as well as Apostles and brethren; so that all prophesied. The same divine gifts continued to prevail in the churches, both as it respected the highest and the subordinate degree of the spirit of prophecy: and we discover throughout the New Testament, that women discharged their responsibility in this respect, and were prophetesses and teachers, edifying the body of believers. I will direct your attention to a few examples in the New Testament. ‘And there was one Anna, a prophetess, &c.; and she, coming in that instant, gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem,’ Luke ii. 36, 38. ‘And the same man had four daughters, virgins, that did prophesy,’ Acts xxi. 9. ‘And when Aquila and PRISCILLA had heard, they took him unto them and expounded unto him

the way of God more perfectly,' Acts xviii. 26. 'Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my helpers in Christ Jesus,' Rom. xvi. 3, 4. 'Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord,' Rom. xvi. 12. 'Help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my *fellow-labourers*, whose names are written in the book of life,' Philippians iv. 3. 'I commend unto you Phœbe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea, that ye receive her in the Lord as becometh saints,' &c. &c. Rom. xvi. 1, 2. These persons are mentioned with honour by the Apostle as *fellow-workers*, who, according to their calling and opportunity, taught, combated, edified, and were spent in the service of the church. If it be answered, all this it is possible they might do *privately*, I answer by referring to 1 Cor. xi. 5, 6, 10, 13, where St. Paul, without any hesitation as to the lawfulness of a woman's teaching, expressly shews her *how* she is to discharge her public calling as a teacher, and to the glory of God.

"These will, I trust, be sufficient evidences for the scriptural right of a female to teach, and will serve to convince your mind that we must not interpret the words of St. Paul to Timothy, ii. 12, in the extent to which they are sometimes wrested, since the Lord is

always consistent with himself, and cannot be supposed to countenance and discountenance, or to command and prohibit, the same thing. Let us add to these considerations, the sovereignty of the Lord, and the words that are written, 'In Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female,' Gal. iii. 28. Let us not presume to dictate or prescribe limits to JEHOVAH's decrees or government. He who is the Author of all our faculties, and the Giver of all spiritual gifts, may surely minister them where and as he pleases. Nor is there any reasonable or any scriptural ground upon which to found an objection to this grace being extended to woman equally as to man. Allow me to remark that a spirit of holy caution should also be observed, lest haply, whilst resisting and vilifying the female worker, we should be found fighting against God. Of this we may say, 'If it be of men,' that is, if the female intrude herself unappointed and uncalled of God to her service, 'it will come to nought, but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it.' And assuredly we have just reason to believe it of God, when we behold his gracious witness giving the seal to the labour, and through the instrument carrying on his sanctifying work. To Him it belongs in his own appointment to fit the instrument by suitable gifts—to open the door and give the opportunity for exercising those gifts—and to bless the exercise by an attendant de-

monstration of the Holy Ghost, converting the soul. And when these combine, they who teach, and they who hear, may rest satisfied that this is one of the instances of divine appointment. "M. S."

E.

Second Annual Meeting of the London City Mission, May, 1837. Extracts from Speeches delivered, viz.—“Some might be ready to say, O what can we do? Go and circulate Bibles, distribute tracts, and visit the sick, and aid, by every means in your power, *those who are thus engaged.*”—REV. E. CAREY.

..... “After we have employed all possible means for the prevention of evil, we have still not communicated good; we have only cleared away the rubbish, but we have not laid the foundations of the temple of God; we have not implanted principles which will purify the lives of men, and make them happy here, and happy through eternity. We find men godless, and we shall leave them so, so long as we do not employ the instrumentality which God himself has appointed, the knowledge of his own word.”.....

..... “And then, there is another class of agency which must not be lost sight of; and though I do not think it can be employed systematically in the way which *some have suggested*, yet I believe that *female*

agency may be *most profitably* employed. Freely they have received, and freely they ought to give."...

..... "And let them exert their influence in their own habitations. If the female is in possession of 'an alabaster box of ointment, very precious,' let her break it, that the odour may go forth for the benefit of others, and for the glory of the Saviour whom she loves. Why should not the purity of her example be seen, and the mistaken and degraded around her be led to seek that salvation which has made her so exemplary? Females also may visit the houses of their poor and afflicted neighbours." "They may impress upon the minds of those younger than themselves, the importance of cultivating early habits of doing good, remembering that saying of our divine Master, 'It is more blessed to give, than to receive.' The mother may teach her little ones, who are rising into life, habits of prudence and economy; a carefulness to gather up the fragments, that nothing be lost, in order that they may have the means of doing good to those to whom those fragments would be a valuable boon."—THE HON. AND REV. B. W. NOEL.

